To the Sober and truly Christian READER.

1654

1667?

Worthy and much honoured Sir,

IN regard of this scribling generation of ours (in the which there is no end of writing of Books) wherein most men of all perswasions in matters of Religion, are so forward (both in Press and Pulpit) to vent their own conceptions as meet expedients for the future settlement of these poor distracted and unsettled Nations. I was before the publication of these ensuing Proposals to the present Parliament, as averse in my Principles (being but a private person) from publishing any thing of the like nature as any person whatsoever. And the rather because I observed that whatever men had proposed therein, did produce so small effects as to the accomplishment for which they were intended, although I am perswaded that the parties themselves thought their own apprehensions were for publick good ; yet being weighed in the ballance of the Sanctuary, and in the scales of right reason (in regard they were so narrow in their assertions, as not including all interests) upon due examination they were found too light ; but yet notwithstanding when I considered with my self, that if a convenient way could possibly be imagined and found out to reconcile, satisfie, and secure all interests together : I thought it would be a very acceptable work, and should thereby render my selfe worthy of my Countries acceptation, (even as it doth often times fall out when two parties are at variance, by the intervening of a third person, proposing something for both their satisfactions, they are at length brought to agree. And *Solomon* himselfe saith *Prov.* 18. 17. *He that is first in his own cause seemeth just, but his neighbour cometh and searcheth him*) I was then perswaded

and reſolved to preſent my ſerious thoughts to publick conſideration; And the Lord of his mercy give a bleſſing therunto. And truly Chriſtian Reader if thou haſt but the leaſt grain of candor (or true affection to thy native Country) in thy breſt, and if thou wilt but peruſe theſe enſuing lines, in regard I do as ſtrongly aſſert thy intereſt both as a man, and as a Chriſtian (though of what perſwaſion ſoever thou art in matters of Religion for I leave that to God to whoſe Judgement alone thou muſt ſtand or fall at the laſt day) as any perſons whatſoever. I am verily perſwaded thou wilt then ſay that they are not hereticall but peaceable; And truly when I ſay I do aſſert thy intereſt as a man, and as a Chriſtian, methinks I ſee ſuch an Emphaſis in the words, that the very cogitations thereof ſhould always poſſeſs thy ſoul with high admiration. For as thou art the firſt, thou art a moſt noble creature, and the great Creator and poſſeſſor of Heaven and Earth, who when he firſt erected this ſublunary and ſtately fabrick, made thee at the laſt, and gave thee the ſeigneury, the Lordſhip, and Dominion over the workmanſhip of his own hands, and what portion he hath allotted in this life, which if acquired neither by force nor fraud (but with the bleſſing of God accompanied with thy own carefull induſtry) thou haſt ſo firm a right and propriety thereunto (and that by the *Magna Charta* of Heaven it ſelf) that none of thy fellow creatures of what ranck or quality ſoever, ought (without an apparent violation to the Statutes aforeſaid) to impair, or of the leaſt mite thereof to diſ-poſſeſs thee. If thou wilt but turn to the 2 *Heb.* 7. there thou maiſt ſee the true efegies in the glaſs of Gods Word. And as thou art the latter, thou art far more more tranſcendently glorious and noble then in the former, for in the firſt place as thou art in this ſtate, thou art not now (as were the *Jews* of old) under the Law of *Moſes*, but under the Law of *Chriſt*. God might (if it had pleaſed him) as well have impoſed as heavy a yoak upon thee, as he did upon them, and have given thee no other reaſon for the ſame then he gave unto them, *viz. Thou ſhalt do ſo and ſo* I AM THE LORD. And indeed there is no other reaſon to be given for any of the Lords proceedings as you read *Rev.* 4. *ult Thou art worthy Oh Lord to receive glory, honour, and power, for thou haſt created all things*

things, and for thy pleaſure they are and were created. But in the New Covenant he hath been more indulgent unto thee in giving thee Chriſtian liberty, and this is that liberty wherewith Chriſt hath made us free, and in the which we are exhorted to ſtand faſt, *Gal.* 5. 1. Not a liberty of licenciouſneſs to ſin (God forbid), but a liberty to love one another. And being by Chriſt delivered from the hands of our enemies (ſome whereof as the Apoſtle intimates, *Epheſ.* 2. 15. *Was the Law even the Law of Commandements and Carnall Ordinances, which was at enmity againſt us*) we might now ſerve God (not according to the traditions and inventions of men) in holineſs and righteouſneſs all the dayes of our life. But again as thou art in this ſtate, to make up the perfection of thy glory thou art heir of eternall life, and ſaying this it is impoſſible for me to write *plus ultra* and therefore in this particular I muſt leave thee.

Having now (Chriſtian Reader) given thee a taſt, before I conſuct thee any farther this one thing I ſhal premiſe of the which I ſhal deſire thee to take ſpecial cognizance which peradventure may be a prevailing argument with thee to proceed farther in the peruſal, *viz.* That I am an unbiaſſed perſon as to the many Sects (being joyn'd to no one particular Cõgregation whatſoever, yet I hope a good Chriſtian, as being cõvinced, that being a member of a Congregation is not the only eſſential property to make up a true believer) which at this day are ſo rife among us. Yet this I muſt needs tell thee, that in ſundry reſpects I could willingly joyn hands with every one of them ; nay, I ſhall not exempt that ſo contemptible and ſo deſpiſed Sect which hath lately riſen amongſt us, namely the poor Quakers (as being unwilling to exclude them out of the verge of my Chriſtian charity). But yet herein I would not bee miſtaken (and ſo my Charity abuſed) for thou muſt know that I do perfectly abhor and deteſt many of his extravagant principles and performances; But yet upon diſcourſe with the ſober party of them (ſuch I mean as will give one a reſponſe to what one ſhal propound to them) they do utterly diſown and renounce ſuch extravagancies. And ſome again are apt to imagine that thoſe perſons which act them, are purpoſely employed by other Sects to bring an *Odium* upon them, how true this is I cannot tell, and therefore (*hoc per viam*) I ſhall proceed.

In my common obſervation, I have taken notice of three parties more eſpecially among us who although they do all unanimouſly concur in acknowledging one God, even the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and do all expect to be ſaved by one and the ſame Faith, even by faith

in that one God through his dear Son the Lord Jesus Christ. Yet notwithstanding do these parties endeavour as much as in them lyes (so often as they come in power and authority) to crush, root out, extirpate (if it were possible) the very race one of another, and do hate and contemn one another, even to the very death, and that upon no other account, then some small difference in judgement. This I say is a lamentation, and will be for a lamentation.

I remember it was just so (as the learned *Josephus in his History of the Warrs of the Jews doth relate*) in that most famous City of *Jerusalem*, immediately before its total ruine & desolation, which was a sure and certain Symptome (and it is too too much to be feared also of ours, if the mercy of God prevent not) of its approaching miseries. And it is worth our observation that just so it will be in the great City of *Rome* (that scarlet whore and mysticall Babylon) when she shall come in remembrance before God to give unto her the Cup of the Wine of the fiercnes of his wrath as you read, *Rev.* 16. 19. The Lord of his mercy grant that this may be a pressing consideration to unite before the fierce anger of God (for our intestine divisions) do break in upon us and there be none to deliver.

The parties before mentioned I presume (Christian Reader) thou hast already in thy thoughts, yet for method sake, I shall here take the pains to insert them, which are in particular as followeth, *viz.*

1. *The Episcopall.*
2. *The Presbyterian.*
3. *The Sectarian.*

And now I have summ'd them together, I presume also I need not give thee a particular description and character (although of the second of these thou wilt find a pretty definition in my next *Epistle*) of all these in generall, how and upon what accompt they came to be thus severally distinguish'd; Yet I shall here take the liberty a little to expatiate my selfe in giving you the sense and apprehensions (wherein also I shall reprove and discover the imbeciilities and imperfections) of every one of them.

In the first place therefore I do verily believe and am fully perswaded that the two former of these (I shall herein joyn them both together, for in this respect they are *Simeon* and *Levi*) do exceedingly traduce and falsly asperse the Sectarian party (although there is nothing

thing more rife in their mouthes, and in all their publique Declarations and Petitions for a free Parliament they do declare for the ſuppreſſion of them upon that very account) in ſaying that they are againſt Magiſtracy and Miniſtry; when as daily experience to every unbiaſſed perſon doth manifeſt the contrary; neither is it poſſible for any rationall man whatſoever (but only ſuch beſotted perſons who will make any thing a plea for their extirpation) to make ſuch a concluſion, and the reaſon is apparent, *viz.* that unleſſe they have the former, ſuch as may be a terror to evill doers, and for the encouragement and praiſe of them that do well; this inconvenience will immediately follow, as we may read it did *de facto*, Judges 21. 25. *when there was no King in Iſrael, and then every man did that which was right in his own eyes.* And as for the latter, they do ſee ſuch reaſon for their neceſſitie, that they themſelves do maintaine ſuch upon their own account. Yet ſo far am I willing to concede with theſe impious wretches in their ſcandalous aſſertions, that I do verily believe they are againſt both (I know they will readily reply, that this is a ſeeming contradiction, but yet if they will apprehend me aright, the paradox is true) I meane againſt ſuch (and herein alſo not againſt their perſons ſimply conſidered, but only againſt their principles) who are of an impoſing and perſecuting ſpirit in matters of Religion.

Againe, I doe verily believe and am fully perſwaded alſo concerning the *Anabaptiſts* (and all others of the ſectarian partie) who are of the like perſwaſion) that they doe extreamly erre when they doe affirme that all the Miniſters in *England* (and all others that will not conforme to them) are Antichriſts, when as if they will but impartially peruſe the ſacred records, there they may finde that thoſe onely are Antichriſts in a Scripture ſenſe, that deny the Father and the Sonne, and deny that Jeſus Chriſt is come in the fleſh. Their extravagancies herein made not long ſince an honeſt and moderate Presbyterian Miniſter (in my hearing) affirme and ſay, that he was glad and had cauſe to rejoyce at the late turne when the Parliament were poſſeſt of their old ſeates againe, that the *Anabaptiſts* (who were before thicker in office then any other perſwaſion) were layd aſide; for, ſaid he, I had rather have any perſwaſion ſet at the ſterne then thoſe; and my reaſon is this, Becauſe they looke upon me to be Antichriſt, and they ſay that Antichriſt muſt be deſtroyed; but whether they mean by the ſword of the Spirit, or by a materiall ſword, I know not, and therefore I ſhould be loth (ſaid he) to give my voyce for them againe to make the concluſion. And

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therefore if when they were in authoritie, had they inſtead of graſping at the whole government in themſelves, but embraced that moſt excellent and wholeſome counſel of the Apoſtle, *Phil.* 4. 5. And had declared for and eſtabliſhed juſt and righteous principles for the ſatisfaction and ſecuritie of all parties in generall, doubtleſs then this Nation would before this time have been in a faire tendency towards a true ſettlement ; But is now reduced ſo exceeding low and poore, that it lyes even at the laſt gaſp for want thereof. But I proceed.

Againe, it is the very griefe of my ſoule to conſider how all theſe parties in generall are puffed up with ſuch a ſtrong conceit of their own opinions; ſo that I have often obſerved, the one he will vaunt it and ſay (like the proud Phariſee) *I thanke God I am not a Presbyterian* ; and a ſecond, he will ſay, *I bleſs God I am not an Epiſcopalian* ; a third, he will ſay, *I am neither an Epiſcopalian, nor yet a Presbyterian :* nay, the very Miniſters themſelves of the two former in their funerall Sermons for their deceaſed friends, by way of *Encomium*, will oftentimes adde this *Elogie* to make up the reſt of their commendations, *viz.* That the partie deceaſed was a true member of the Church, and not poyſoned with any Sectarian principles, which (they ſay) have ſprang up in this viperous generation : So that in theſe reſpects they are all, moſt worthy of that ſharpe reproofe, which the Apoſtle *Paul* did give the *Corinthians* upon the ſame account, as you may reade, 1 *Cor.* 1. 10, 11, 12, &c.

I will hope (Chriſtian Reader) that thou art not a perſon, which falls under this uſe of reprehenſion, but if thou art, I doe moſt humbly importune thee that as thou tendereſt thy everlaſting ſalvation, and as thou wouldſt not be ſeperated from the preſence of God to all eternitie, that thou wouldſt have a ſpeciall care of this moſt damnable and Heaven-provoking ſin of ſpirituall pride : oh remember (I ſay, *iterum atque iterum* remember) that this was the ſin that tempted our firſt Parents to taſte of the forbidden fruit. And this was the ſin that cauſed the evill Angells not to keep their firſt eſtate, *but left their owne habitation, and are now reſerved under chaines of darkneſs till the Judgement of the great day.* Who art thou ? thou vaine worthleſs worm ; nay (if abſtracted from thy Creator) leſs then nothing, that thou ſhouldſt be ſo puft up, with ſuch a conceit that thou art better then others, when as the Apoſtle 1 *Cor.* 4. 7. doth ſilence thee in one verſe, that if thou art better or more ſpirituall then others, *who made thee to differ, and what haſt thou that thou haſt not received* ; and therefore to whom ſhouldſt thou aſcribe the glory, but to him from whom thou didſt receive it ;

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Let me tell thee (whosoever thou art) that this is so farre from selfdeniall (so frequently inculcated in sacred Writ for our imitation) that thou dost thereby intrench upon the peereles prerogative of Almighty God, whose prerogative it is alone to have high thoughts of himselfe. But to proceed.

As these parties before-mentioned are opposite one to another in spirituall's, so also are they at as great distance (in sundry poynts in relation to govèrnment) in temporalls, as by the sequel of this Epistle it will plainly appeare. As for instance.

First, The Episcopall partie they affirme that unless the King be againe restored to his former principalities, which is (say they) his undoubted birth-right and inheritance, and unless they can have a full and a free Parliament, consisting of the three former estates of this Nation, *viz.* King, Lords and Commons, we cannot possibly have any peace and tranquilitie in this Common-wealth.

Secondly, The Presbyterian partie, they also harp much upon the same string, and say, That unless we have a free and a full Parliament, consisting of such like concommitants, who may establish Religion in its full force and splendor, we cannot possibly expect any settlement in this Common-wealth.

Thirdly, The Sectarian partie, they also have as enlarged thoughts as the two former for a full and a free Parliament (as the undoubted birth-right of the *English* Nation) but withall say they, that unless we can have some things first secured, but more especially Libertie of conscience in the exercise of Religion, they do at present suspend their Judgements, and thinke that a full and a free Parliament is not the only probable meanes (at this juncture of time) to secure the peace and prosperitie of this Common-wealth.

As to the last of these I shall not make any reply, as being partly convinced to be of the same judgement; But as to the two first (whereby to allay and asswage the heat of the hot spirited Cavalier, together with the rigid and Royall Presbyter, among whom Mr. *Prinne* himselfe is also included) I shall here againe assume the libertie a little to enlarge by presenting a few sober & important Queries (some whereof I found the other day ready [illegible] to my hands in a printed sheete of paper) to their serious Considerations.

I. Whether Mr. *Prinn* (or any other male contented persons of the like perswasion) having a most magnificent and stately house, and the foundations thereof growing rotten and exceeding much to decay, so

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that unleſſe it be more ſtrongly ſecured and repaired (which might be done with a very inconſiderable coſt) it would endanger the falling downe of the whole ſuperſtructure, whether any of theſe perſons would not willingly (rather then ſuffer their houſe to fall to the ground) be at the expences of reparations in this particular ?

II. Whether that deſcription and character of a King breathed forth to the Prophet by the infallible Spirit of God, 1 *Sam.* 8. hath not been true in all ages of the world (only ſometimes it hath pleaſed God out of ſpeciall favour to his people to raiſe them up an upright & juſt Monarche) ſo that have we not juſt ground to feare (in regard wee are ſo madly enraged and inſenſed, that nothing will content us but a kingly government) although God hath moſt ſignally in legible characters ſhewen his late diſpleaſure therewith in the totall abolition thereof) leaſt he ſhould (as he did to the people of the *Jewes*) give us a king in his wrath.

III. Whether the Kings of *England* (or ſingle perſons) as chiefe Magiſtrates thereof, had their right and title thereunto, by the immediate deſignation & appointment of Almightie God, ſo that they could as properly ſay, as *David* and *Saul* could, *That they were the Lords anointed.*

IV. Whether if not by Gods immediate deſignation, it was not acquired at the firſt by force or fraud, or confer'd upon them by mutuall conſent and agreement for ſociety and ſafeties ſake ?

V. Whether (if ſo confer'd) the people conferring was not the ſupreame authoritie ?

VI. Whether *Oliver Cromwell* (the late tyrant Protector) having by his great valour & magnanimity in the late warres acquired ſo much power, and afterwards his ambitious ſpirit ſoaring ſo high, as not being willing to admit of any competitor, did thereupon (by his cunning inſinuations and ſpecious pretences into the hearts of the people) procure himſelfe (though it was then high treaſon by a law in ſo doing) to be made Lord Protector; whether I ſay, he being afterwards owned and confirmed by ſucceſſive Parliaments, had not as much right and title (both to him and his heires for ever) to the chiefe Magiſtracy of theſe Nations, as any of the Kings of *England* that were before him.

VII. Whether it can upon any principles of Reaſon, be imagined, that the people thus ſenſible of the benefit of ſocietie, and in order thereunto, making choice of ſuch a forme of Government and ſubjection, did not alſo by ſome equall rules ballance the power, ſo as to prevent

vent tyranny in their King (or chiefe Magiſtrate) and ſlavery to them and their poſterities.

VIII. Whether if the power were attained by force or fraud, although for a time the people for neceſſitie ſake doe ſubmit thereunto, may they not throw off that ſlavery and bondage, and ſo recover their freedomes if by any meanes they can?

IX. Whether if in caſe of compact and mutuall conſent, the King taking upon him the Government upon condition of performance, and that upon oath ſolemnly taken in the preſence of the people, he ſhall notwithſtanding act contrary thereunto, (meerely according to his owne will) thereby rendering that which was intended for a common good a publique miſchiefe; whether in this caſe the people are tied up to a ſlaviſh and ſervile obedience, and left without all manner of remedie, either of diveſting him of that authoritie, or calling him to an account for male adminiſtration, or judging him by the ſayd compact and agreement, and if ſo, upon what principles of reaſon or prudence could they ſubmit to ſuch a ſlavery?

X. Whether if the people may call their King or ſupreame Magiſtrate to an account, they may not elect another, or chooſe and eſtabliſh any other forme of government whatſoever appearing to them moſt agreeable and moſt conducing to their future peace and tranquilitie.

XI. Whether any Government in the world, be more likely to anſwer the great ends and expectations of the good people of this Nation, then when their Lawes are made by their own repreſentatives, freely choſen by themſelves, and ſhall be equally limitted and reſtrained as to the exerciſe and obedience of that power, ſo that he that is a legiſlator one day, ſhall be ſubject to the ſame law the next, and therefore will be carefull how he entailes ſlavery upon himſelfe and poſteritie; the Lawes binding all alike, and not ſaying, *thou ſhalt not kill but I may*; *but whoſoever ſheddeth mans blood, by man ſhall his blood be ſhed*; and ſo in all other caſes.

XII. Whether Mr. *Prinne* (being an utter Barreſter of *Lincolnes Inne*, and eſteemed by moſt a man of a pregnant capacity in frameing of Lawes) can poſſibly deviſe or imagine a better forme of Government, to the ſatisfying of the people in generall, then that before-mentioned (and whereas *Solomon* himſelfe ſaith (who I believe all will acknowledge was a wiſer man then Mr. *Prinne*) *that in the multitude of Counceilors there is ſafetie*) and if ſo, whether the good people of this Nation would not willingly conforme thereunto?

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Hoping by theſe few Queries I ſhall ſomewhat calme the ſpirits of theſe hot ſpirited men. I ſhall now proceed a little farther, and ſhew that when I do ſeriouſly weigh and conſider the tempers of theſe perſons. I cannot ſufficiently wonder and admire at the wiſdome and all wiſe providence of Almighty God, in bringing their counſells and devices to none effect. As for inſtance in the latter of theſe two, and it ſhall be touching the late wars, between the late King and the Parliament, (as to the legality and juſtneſs thereof on the Parliaments part. I ſhall refer thee for ſatisfaction to a book lately publiſht by Mr. *Nedham* intituled *Intereſt will not lye*) when after many ſharp conteſts and bloody battles fought on either ſide, and after many ſolemne appeales made to heaven to decide the Controverſie, it pleaſed the Lord of Hoſts the God of battle, at length to decide the quarrell on the Parliaments ſide, by the totall vanquiſhing the King and his party, and now being put (by the good hand of providence) into a capacity of making ſuch tearms with his majeſty, as might ſecure the intereſts, the juſt rights and liberties of all the good people of this nation in generall, yet notwithſtanding, becauſe they ſaw their own deſigns not feaſeable, in that they could not compell all men (by reaſon of a new Independant and Sectarean faction as they tearme it) which had alſo riſen up among them in thoſe times of liberty and reformation) to fall down and worſhip their great *Diana*, the *Preſbiterean government*, they combined together, (taking in alſo the Cavileer party into the conſpiracy, which before was at as great a diſtance and contrariety one to another as light and darkneſſe, yet behold now *Herod* and *Pilate* were reconciled) to conclude a peace with the King upon their and his own tearms (without ſecuring the intereſt of the good people of *England* in generall) whereby they might procure again a ſtronger coercive power then before againſt all the contemners thereof. Had not Allmighty God by an extraordinary providence interpoſed (although the inſtruments therein cannot poſſibly be juſtified according to law, yet by the lawes of neceſſity it was warrantable enough) by putting into the hearts of ſome men, to break off and diſſolve that treaty, and did exclude thoſe Gentlemen (which are called the ſecluded Members) who were the promoters thereof, from ſitting any longer in the Houſe, whereupon the other party of the Parliament, which had remained faithfull to the Common-wealth, and true intereſt thereof (and here it is worth our obſervation how they were before driven away by their fellow members, and were forced to repaire to the Army for ſhelter and ſecurity, ſo that their ſecluſion was but *lex talionis*

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when they were secluded) did immediately proceed to Justice upon the King, making him guilty, (as I am almost afraid it was too true) of all the blood that had been spilt in the late warrs, by appearing in actuall arms against his Parliament, (which did only contend with him for their just rights and liberties) to the destruction of the people which were his loyall subjects, and so would have continued had he not so far incroacht upon their [illegible]s. But because I am unwilling to unravell this botome too far (desiring rather to be of an healing spirit, then to make green wounds bleed afresh.) I shall now proceed to what I mainly intended in the publication hereof, which was to reconcile us altogether in love and unity, which is the only undoubted way for our future preservation.

And therefore most worthy readers, (My dear friends and countrymen) The premises considered (wherein you have seen your humane frailties and embicellities,) and seeing you find it a thing almost altogether impossible to reconcile your selves together in several circumstantials (which are but the fig-gleanes of Religion) let not difference in judgement any longer devide us from closing in affection. But let us all unanimously concur in brotherly love and fervent charity among our selves which is the bond of perfection, for whatever thoughts and imaginations we have of our selves, what we are able & willing to do for the truth of God, yet if we have not charity, the Apostle tells us, 1 *Cor.* 13. 1. *We are but as sounding brass and as a tinckling cymbal.* And when this is accomplisht, then let us unanimously concur also to stand up & to declare for that which is the undoubted birth-right of our English Nation, even a full and a free Parliament without any qualifications or restrictions whatsoever, who may govern in the way of a free State and equal Common-wealth, wherein all parties of all perswasions may be freely admitted to an equal participation in the Government thereof, and not as our good Lord *Monck* (as the *Scotch*-men call him, whom I fear have made him too much a Proselite to their Religion) would have it, who although in his Letter to his Country-men (the *Devon*-Shire Gentlemen) saith that since the abolition of Monarchy in these Nations, there was so many interest interwoven, which said he ought to be included and secured that nothing could possibly settle us upon a sure and lasting foundation, but a Republique, and thereupon doth intreat these Gentlemen to desist from that Paper wherein they desired the admission of the secluded Members to sit again in the House ; for said he, that Government under which we were formerly, both in

Church

Church and State, cannot possibly be admitted again, because its support is taken away, and because its exclusive of all the former interests, both civil and spiritual, all of them being incompatible with Monarchical uniformitie in Church and State thus expired ; wherefore to me, said he, its no smal doubt, if upon the premises to admit of the Members secluded in 1648, were not to obstruct our peace and continue our war, rather then establish the one and end the other, in that very many of those Members assert the Monarchical interest together, withall Laws to be abolished which have been made since their seclusion, which I fear upon account of selfe preservation both of life and estate as well as spiritual liberty, will immediately involve all these Nations in most horrid and bloudy wars afresh, the very apprehensions thereof, saith he, I must confesse I do infinitely dread and submit the dangerous consequence thereof to your prudent considerations. These courteous Reader were his very words, and yet in his last speech to the Parliament (*viz*: that Parliament from whom he received his Commission) he so far forgot himselfe as to give them advice not to admit of the two former interests to any civil or military employment in this Common-wealth. And although he then told his Masters that what he had done in being faithful to them he did nothing but his duty, and told them the usual answer he gave to all the Countrys as he came out of *Scotland*, was that they ought to acquiesce in the judgement of the Parliament, who had already decided the businesse as to the secluded Members, and yet but a very few dayes after he gives those very Gentlemen free admission into the house, which he said before was favourites of the Monarchical interest, and therefore what should we say to these things but only cease from man whose breath *is in his nostrils, neither put any confidence in Princes*; and truly from which words and actions a man may easily infer that he is a better Souldier then a Politician, and can give better advice for the modelling of an Army to reduce a malignant City to a compliance with Supream Authority; then to give advice for the steering (and securing from sinking) the ship of a Common-wealth.

In my ensuing request to the present Parliament, I have there laid down several fundamentals (which in all ages of the world will be necessary articles to be observed for securing the peace and tranquility of this Common-wealth) which in the constitution of the government should (like the Laws of the *Medes* and *Persians*) be unalterable ; and for the better securing the same, I have there also proposed the form

of

of an oath to be taken by every Member of Parliament (being legally and fairly choſen) before he be admitted to his Seſſion in Parliament, wherein our Truſtees are ſo limited (with ſuch clauſes, reſtrictions and proviſoes) that it will be impoſſible for them (or for any future repreſentatives) though of themſelves never ſo corrupt to entail ſlavery upon our poſterities. And there is ſo much reaſon to be given for all thoſe particulars, that no rational man in the world ſhall be able to deny the legallity and juſtneſſe thereof, for if the King himſelf was ſo limitted by *Magna Charta* and the Petition of Right, from whence came that good old maxime in the Law (which was once the Parliaments own words) *viz:* That the King could do no wrong, but if any were done in matters of State, the Council; and if in matters of juſtice, the Judges were to be accomptable for male adminiſtration; And if the old Protector (that uſurped Tyrant) togerher with his Son did ſo limit their Parliaments as to impoſe upon them a previous engagement (with reſpect to the Government) before their admiſſion to act in Parliamentary proceedings, then is there not much more reaſon in regard all do acknowledge that all power is; or ought to be originally in the people, that the people ſhould impoſe upon their Truſtees as much as the former in relation to their juſt Rights and Liberties.

I know many wil be apt to ſay alſo, that if a Parliament be thus bounded, limited, and reſtrained, in relation to the premiſes, how can they properly becalled a free Parliament? This objection I muſt confeſs I have heard many alledge, but it is ſo weak that it is without doores as ſoone almoſt as it is within, but being willing to give all reaſonable ſatisfaction; I anſwer, That I had thought a Parliament had been free when they are freely choſen (if you make this objection, you will not be able to give me an inſtance of a free Parliament in your ſenſe, that hath been this 400 yeares) what, is not a man that hath ſerved his apprentiſhip in *London* a free man of *London*, becauſe of his Oath taken before the Chamberlaine at his admiſſion thereunto, to obſerve and performe all the lawes, cuſtomes, and ceremonies of the conſtitution thereof? Is not my Lord Mayor freely choſen the chiefe Magiſtrate of the Citie, becauſe of his Oath taken (to performe all Lawes and Statutes that are in force in executing Juſtice between man and man) before he be inſtalled in the Government thereof. And indeed in my judgement the Government of this moſt famous Citie, is the rareſt Government in the world, for indeed if we doe rightly conſider, what is it that hath made it ſtand ſo long (ſo famous and renowned) but onely the bounds, the

qualifica-

qualifications and restrictions (and certainly our Forefathers were sage Politicians that did first erect it) in the constitution thereof,& doubtless it will yet stand firme enough (unless they forfeit their Charter by non-compliance with Supreame Authoritie) without the least danger of being subverted or falling to the ground.

Againe, I am not ignorant that some are of an opinion (and that not a few, who otherwise are very intelligent and understanding persons) and say that we ought to acquiesce in the Judgements, Lawes and Statutes of a Parliament, whether it be to our preservation or to our destruction: but to such I shall desire them to take notice that I am not of that perswasion, and that for good reason enducing me thereunto; for if I employ a servant (and Parliaments are but the trustees of the people, and servants of the Common-wealth) and give into his hands an 100 *ll.* with commission and instruction to employ the same for my use for the improvement thereof: Now if in stead of employing it according to my intent and purpose, he shall lavish and consume the same, certainly my own reason will suggest that I ought to discard him, and turne him out of commission, and as soone as I have an opportunitie, will receive and employ others upon the same account. Although I must confess in a Nation where the supream Authoritie is so lodged in a single person, and the people are not in a capacitie to redeeme themselves from such a slavery, the case is different; but it is now (blessed be God) otherwise with us,& we have purchased our Liberties (which some are so foolish and besotted as to thinke it was rebellion in so doing) with the price of our blouds.

Againe, I am of an opinion that I shall undergo some censures from the Anabaptisticalparty, because in my fundamentals I have said nothing in relation to Tythes, but to them I shall take leave to reply, that though they were convinced in Judgement, that tythes now under the Gospel is not *(jure Divino)* the maintenance alotted for a Gospel Ministry, yet if in case when in all their Petitions which they presented for the abolition of them, they had therein also desired the Parliament to have taken some course for the providing of so many hundred families, which thereby would have been undone and reduced to extream want and necessity, I should have applauded their discretion and commended their charity, and therefore I shall leave this matter to future Representatives to take into their serious considerations. Methinks I hear also all moderate and sober Christians (after their perusal hereof) declare in general and say that they could willingly with

all

all their hearts (and it would be the very rejoycing of their ſoules) to have all theſe things here inſerted ſpeedily and perfectly accompliſht (as judging them altogether juſt, reaſonable, and neceſſary for our future well-being and preſervation) but yet ſay they, there is one Article in your fundamentalls, which is, *That no coercive power ſhall be uſed in matters of Religion, &c.* that wee are ſure and certaine is ſo averſe to the principles of moſt of our Miniſters in *England*, that they will never give their conſents nor agree thereunto. But as ſoone as they ſhall come to heare that it is likely to be accompliſht, they will rage like ſo many Beares robbed of their whelpes, and ſay that the glory of God, their faith, their Religion, and their all, lyes at ſtake; and although wee muſt confeſs that we have ſometimes a glimpſe that many of their doctrines which they impoſe upon us are ſomewhat irrationall, yet to anticipate us herein they will affirme (and will pawne their ſoules alſo upon the truth thereof) that in things to be believed wee muſt ſubject our reaſon to our faith, and not our faith to our carnall (as they call it) and corrupted Reaſon. But to ſolve this objection be pleaſed to know, that I have purpoſely taken a little paines in preſenting a few lines unto them upon this very account. And although perhaps it may not give them ſatisfaction, yet peradventure it may ſo farre ſatisfie and prevaile with Supreame Authoritie, as that they will not give heed to theſe Charmers in what they ſhall alledge to the contrary (in regard of the abſolute neceſſitie thereof for the Nations future preſervation) though they charme never ſo loud.

It is probable alſo ſome may ſay, that if in caſe I am convinced in Judgement that what I do here aſſert and plead for, be undoubtedly true, why then am I aſhamed thereof, in not ſubſcribing my name thereunto, but let ſuch be pleaſed to know that it is not becauſe I am aſhamed thereof (for I could willingly with all my ſoule engage to ſeale my blood upon theſe principles) but in regard I have many friends & relations of contrary principles to me herein, who when they ſhould come to peruſe it, would be too apt to ſay, that I did it more out of oſtentation and vaine-glory, then to contend for the truth, I was willing therefore (becauſe I would not offend my weake brethren) to conceale my name.

I cannot Divine, and therefore am not able to foreſee or foretell what influence this will have upon the preſent Supreame Authoritie, yet certaine I am I have here preſented to publique view ſo much the ſence and deſires of the ſober partie of this Nation, that I doe verily

believe they will never leave ſtrugling and wreſtling both with God and men (though theſe now at the ſterne ſhould not accompliſh the worke) till they have procured a Government conſonant hereunto.

I am afraid Chriſtian Reader by ſo prolix an Epiſtle I have too far intrencht upon thy patience in the peruſal thereof, and therefore ſhall not detain thee any longer, but draw towards a period; And as it was my requeſt unto thee that thou wouldſt take notice of one thing in the introduction, ſo I ſhall deſire thee to take notice of one thing alſo in the concluſion, namely, that in the publication hereof, I doe moſt ſolemnly proteſt as in the preſence of Almightie God, that I have no ſiniſter or private end whatſoever, but onely the glory of God, and the reſtauration of the peace and proſperitie of the Land and Nation of my nativitie. And therefore ſhall humbly importune and beſeech thee to joyne with me in thy fervent prayers to Almightie God, that it would pleaſe him out of his rich mercy to raiſe up ſuch men, as *Moſes*, *Caleb*, and *Joſhua*, who may now ſtand in the breach, leaſt the fierce anger of God breake in upon us for our crying abominations (whereof want of charitie and true affection one towards another undoubtedly is a principall) and therefore I ſay againe, how ought every good and well minded Chriſtian to looke upon it as a dutie incumbent on him to betake himſelfe to his prayers to the Father of mercies (who hath ſtiled himſelfe, *a God gracious and mercifull, long-ſuffering, and abounding in goodneſſe and in truth*) for the accompliſhment thereof, that ſo wee may at length worſhip him according to his own preſcript (and not after the traditions and inventions of men) even in ſpirit and in truth. This is the fervent deſire and prayer of

(Chriſtian Reader)

Thy moſt reall and moſt affectionate Friend
to ſerve thee in all Chriſtian duties whatſoevever.

To

To all thoſe in England *who are of a perſecuting and an impoſing Spirit in matters of Religion, which are commonly called the Miniſters of Jeſus Chriſt.*

Men, Brethren, and Fathers,

IT is the ſaying of that bleſſed Apoſtle, 1 *Tim.* 3. 1. *If a man deſire the Office of a Biſhop, he deſireth a good Office, where alſo you have at large the true qualifications of a Biſhop, and ſo conſequently of a true Miniſter of Jeſus Chriſt.* Now if any of you are really ſuch a one, and enricht with all thoſe goodly properties there expreſt [although peradventure you may here anticipate me, and ſay, that it is not an inward qualification without an outward adminiſtra i-on, that makes a true Miniſter of Jeſus Chriſt, ſo then alſo will I ſay, thatit is not an external vocation without an internal qualification(they being ſo inſeparably united) that makes a true Miniſter of Jeſus Chriſt) thou art then higher by the head and ſhoulders then other men, for ſuch a one the Apoſtle doth recommend to us as a perſon worthy of double honour ; but if thou art otherwiſe (and haſt nothing but an externall vocation, which is but as a cypher in compariſon of the former) I muſt tell thee, and that from the very words of our bleſſed Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, (*Jo.* 10. 10. from whoſe mouth never came guile, and ſo certainly may be believed) thou art but an hireling, a thief and a robber, and ſo altogether unworthy of that appellation, whereby thou art called.

In my publication of this enſuing diſcourſe. I do not expect (neither was it that which I aimed at as being a thing in my apprehenſion almoſt altogether unpoſſible) to reconcile all parties in judgement, in ſeverall circumſtantialls in matters of Religion, yet out of zeal to the glory of God, and out of that tender affection, which I bear to my native Country, I have endeavoured as much as in me lyes (the Lord of his mercy give a bleſſing thereunto) to reconcile all parties in brotherly love and affection, as the only way to preſerve us all from future ruine and deſtruction. And this being accompliſht, I have after endeavoured alſo to perſwade every one of us unanimouſly to concur in declaring for a full and Free Parliament(the undoubted birthright of our

Engliſh Nation) without any qualifications or reſtrictions what ſoever, who may govern in the way of a Free State and Common-wealth; wherein alſo I have endeavoured that every individuall mans intereſt (both as to civills and ſpiritualls) ſhall be ſo ſtrongly ſecured from the encroachments of Tyranny and oppreſſion, that it ſhall be impoſſible for future repreſentatives (though of themſelves never ſo corrupt) to intail ſlavery upon our poſterities. And I am verily perſwaded that you alſo at the very firſt ſight, will be ready to give your aſſent unto moſt of thoſe Fundamentalls in the Government, which in all ages of the world will be neceſſary Articles to be inviolably preſerved for the peace and tranquility of ſucceeding Generations; Even as in ſacred writ there are ſeverall Articles of truth ſo Fundamentall (I call that only a Fundamentall Truth which is of abſolute neceſſity to ſalvation) which in all ages of the Church will be neceſſary to be believed. And that this is not my own bare apprehenſions, I ſhall give you an inſtance in a pious and learned man, *Peter de Moulin* (whom I know you approve to be Orthodox) of the ſame judgement it is in his preface to his Book Intituled *The accompliſhment of the Prophecies*, his words are theſe. *I am perſwaded ſaith he, that in Chriſtian Religion there is not one Article of Faith but may be neceſſary to ſalvation at one time, and yet not neceſſary at another.* And farther he ſaith, *That God though he hath covered future events with a thick darkneſs, yet hath propoſed the things neceſſary to ſalvation with great perſpicuitie.*

But in aſmuch as you have always had ſuch a powerfull influence upon ſupream authorities, who for the moſt part have been always unable (by reaſon of their not being converſant in the Scriptures, which alone are able to make wiſe unto ſalvation) to make a through ſcrutiny & inſpection into the very marrow and life of Religion. They have always pinn'd their Faith upon your ſleevs, and have continually eſtabliſh'd, ratified, and confirmed, whatever you have declared as to the ſubject thereof; whereupon to our ſo much deſired felicity there is an obſtruction in the way, and an objection by many already levied againſt you (ſo that unleſs this *Remorah* be removed they do almoſt utterly deſpair of the arriving of the good ſhip of this Common-wealth into ſuch a deſired harbour) which is this, *viz.* That there is one Article in the Government, namely that there ſhall be no coerſive power uſed in matters of Religion, *&c.* So averſs to your Principles, that you will never be perſwaded to give your aſſents thereunto; whereupon I have purpoſely addreſſed my ſelfe in a few lines unto you, whereby to convince

vince you (if it pleaſe God to enlighten the eye of your underſtanding to diſcern the truth) of the neceſſity thereof.

In purſuance whereof, *in primis & ante omnia*, be pleaſed to know that I am no Univerſity Scholar (having hardly in my education paſſed the rudiments of humane learning) and therefore am unable to expreſs my ſelfe in ſuch high Syllogiſticall and Scholaſtique tearms, as probably will be expected, from a perſon that hath aſſumed to encounter with ſo many grave and ſage Philoſophers who are ſuch profound and able proficients in the knowledge thereof. But yet I hope I ſhall be able (through the grace of God aſſiſting me) to prove with arguments drawn from the Scripture (if any ſhall be pleaſed to take the pains to give anſwer thereunto, my humble requeſt unto him is that that his reſponſe may be cloathed in the ſame language) to juſtifie me in whatever I ſhall aſſert in the following particulars.

I know it is the comm n doctrine by you propoſed, the which alſo upon your auditors you have always impoſed (I am able by experience to atteſt the truth thereof, as being an ear witneſs thereunto, in many of your ſermons delivered before the Lord Mayor of the City of *London*) *viz.* That if once this doctrine ſay you be generally received, that the civill Magiſtrate hath nothing to do in matters of religion, and that thereupon an univerſall toleration of all Religions may freely (without controul) be admitted. Then upon ſuch a licentious (as you call it) liberty as this ; This wretched conſequence will immediately ſucceed, *viz.* That all Popery, Superſtition, and Profaneſs will break in upon us like an overflowing flood, and all errors, Hereſie, and Blaſphemies will follow after like a mighty ſtream. Theſe are your words, and indeed they are but words, and ſuch where ever you received them as (I hope by the ſequel of this diſcourſe will plainly appear) were firſt hatched by infernal Spirits, purpoſely to drive on the intereſt, and to enlarge the territories of the Kingdom of Satan. For if you will but obſerve, you may pleaſe to take notice that the eldeſt ſons of the Devill (I mean the Jeſuiticall Papiſts) ſpeak the very ſame language. For ſay they if once this Doctrine be admitted, that the Pope hath not an infallible Spirit to determine controverſies in Religion, and if once our perſecutions, and inquiſitions be taken off from the oppoſers of the true antient Catholick and Apoſtolick Faith ; Then by this damnable liberty, this conſequence will immediately follow. That all Hereticks, Sciſmaticks, and oppoſers of our Religion will break in upon our borders, and ſo by degrees the

Vicar of Christ (who as a Gentleman in his History of the Council of *Trent*, doth very notably observe, is so far from being the same that he is the most pernitious quacksalving jugler in the world) his Church and truth together will fall to the ground. Pray do but compare these two Doctrines together, and then let all rational men in the world judg if you do not punctually agree in your verdicts. But it is wel that those whom you do with open face brand with the appellation of Sectaries (whose Principles in Religion in sundry particulars are far more Orthodox then your own) are of the contrary opinion, and they argue and conclude (& that rightly not fearing the subversion of the truth, thus. That as Earthen vessels being joynd together with those of Gold or Silver are broken to pieces. So say they, if God the Author of peace shall bring back again into the Church this happy tollerance, all false opinions fighting hard hand to hand with the true will at length be broken to shivers. And like unwholesome vapours before the rising Sun will vanquish away and fall to the ground. And indeed truth it self is bare armour of proof against all the assaults and fiery darts of Satan. So that I may truly say, according to that infallible Maxime, *Magna est veritas & prevalebit*. And that this is such a truth that neither you, nor all the Devills in Hell shall be able to gain say, is hence apparent (the which if you and all the Sectaries in the world, and all the infernall Spirits should combine together to root out, and extirpate, you would find at last an utter impossibility of the accomplishment thereof) since we have the promise of our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, (*Mat.* 5. 18. for the defence and continuation thereof. But I proceed wherein I shall clearly demonstrate (and that I hope from the evidence and demonstration of the blessed Spirit of God) that neither you, nor your Forefathers (whom you so much Idolize in treading in their steps whereby you make the Commandements of God voyd and of none effect by your traditions) nor the Apostles themselves, nor yet our Lord and blessed Saviour Jesus Christ had ever any commission from almighty God, to use any coersive power (or to persecute, compell, or put any to death as dissenters in matters of Religion) in bringing men to salvation, and so consequently that no Christian Magistrate whatsoever, whether supream, or subordinate; whether Ecclesiastick or civil, hath any power from the most high God, or from Christ to persecute, compel, imprison, or put to death the persons of any that shall dissent in matters of Religion; and if so then I hope the consequence will be undeniable, that your great *Dagon*

(whom

whom you have ſo long adored) of compulſion and perſecution muſt fall to the ground.

If I prove the two latter (in regard you acknowledge your ſelves to be the ſucceſſors) you muſt grant the former.

In proſecution whereof, be pleaſed to take notice that I ſhal obſerve this method, *viz.* I ſhall firſt lay down a place of Scripture [though I ſhal not quote it at large, becauſe I wil ſave the Printer ſome labour] and from thence draw my inference. and not according to the generality of the diſputers of our days, who will firſt frame their Arguments according to their own fond imaginations, and then alledge ſome probable place of Scripture for proof thereof. Nay, I muſt confeſt I have heard and ſeen ſeverall Arguments linck'd together without ſo much as one place of Scripture quoted to prove their aſſertions, and yet have impoſed them upon others as certain truths to be imbraced, and ſo no marvell that men have ſuck'd in ſo many errors inſtead of truths.

I ſhal deſire alſo that this one thing more, may be likewiſe obſerved, namely that I ſhal produce all my Arguments out of the Scripture of the New Teſtament. And therefore if any ſhal go about to make invallid, what I have from thence aſſerted, by Arguments taken out of the Old Teſtament records; I muſt anticipate him therein and ſay, that his Arguments from thence will be of no validity, as to the matter here diſcuſſed. And my reaſon is this, becauſe wee find that under the Old Covenant (which was a Covenant of works] many offences [of a far lower degree then Blaſphemy] againſt the violation thereof did admit of no expiation. But the offendors therein by Gods ſpeciall and expreſs command were to undergo the puniſhment of a violent death. But in the new Covenant [which is a Covenant of grace] wherein God by Chriſt hath introduced a more excellent and perfect Law [in the which eternall life and eternal death is propoſed] wherein God is ſo indulgent, ſo propitious, and ſo exceeding long ſuffering, that offendors in the like nature ſhal not immediately undergo the penalty thereof eternal death. But upon their repentance by the virtue & efficacy of the blood of Chriſt, and by virtue of his interceſſion their ſins ſhal be expiated & then received again to the mercy & favour of their heavenly Father. And what wil you now like merciles wretches puniſh thoſe with a temporall and violent death whom God by the lenity of the Chriſtian Covenant upon repentance will again receive to mercy, that ſo they

may

may not endure the paines of an eternall. Let me tell you in ſo doing you doe intrench upon the peerleſſe prerogative of Almightie God, and doe thereby deſtroy both their ſoules and bodies (unleſſe God be merciſull unto them in giving them repentance immediately) becauſe you will not ſuffer them to live to repent, that ſo they may be re-admitted into the boſome of their Heavenly Father. And whereas I could alledge many more arguments then is here inſerted to prove my aſſertion, yet I ſhall confine my ſelfe, and will empannell onely a full Jury of Divine Atteſtators, to give in their verdicts in the behalfe of the Defendant. And I ſhall firſt begin with the words of our bleſſed Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, who being guided by an infallible Spirit, certainly all will conclude him to be a competent Judge to decide ſo great a Controverſie.

Argument the firſt, from *Luke* 9. 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56.

If our bleſſed Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt would not have thoſe deſtroyed which would not receive him, nor embrace his Doctrine, which was the glad tydings of ſalvation. Then no Chriſtian Magiſtrate whatſoever, &c. hath any power from God or Chriſt to compell, perſecute, or deſtroy any man in matters of Religion.

But our bleſſed Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt would not have ſuch deſtroyed, &c.

Ergo

You ſee the Major is undeniable from the very words of the text. You ſee alſo the Minor is as evident as the Major. And it is here worth your obſervation that the Diſciples of Chriſt were it ſeemes of as hot ſpirits, and were as blinde in that particular as your ſelves, but you ſee our Saviour not onely cooles but reproves their ignorant zeale in theſe words; *You know not of what ſpirit you are; For the ſonne of Man is not come to deſtroy mens lives, but to ſave them. Ergo* the conſequence is undeniable, if the words of Chriſt are worthy to be embraced.

Argument ſecond, from *Mat.* 12. 31, 32.

If all ſin and blaſphemy now under the new Covenant againſt God and Chriſt upon repentance ſhall be forgiven, then no Chriſtian Magiſtrate whatſoever, &c. ought to perſecute or put men to death upon that account.

But

But all ſin and blaſphemy now under the new Covenant upon repentance ſhall be forgiven.
Ergo.

Argument third, from *John* 4. 21, 22, 23, 24.

If the true worſhippers of God ought (according to the Scripture) to worſhip him (not in this or that place only, or in this or that forme only, but) *in Spirit and in truth*; Then no Chriſtian Magiſtrate whatſoever ought to compell men, nor to perſecute thoſe that will not conforme to this or that forme of worſhip whatſoever.

But the true worſhippers of God ought according to the Scripture to *worſhip him in Spirit and in truth.*
Ergo.

Argument fourth, from *Mat.* 13. 28, 29, 30.

If our bleſſed Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt would not have the tares (which are wicked, erroneous, and ungodly men) pluckt up till the harveſt (which is the end of the world, the day of Judgement) leaſt in plucking up the tares, the wheate (which are righteous and godly men) ſhould accidentally be plucked up alſo. Then no Chriſtian Magiſtrate whatſoever, &c. ought by the expreſſe precept of Chriſt to uſe any violent courſe in that nature, leaſt in ſuppoſing he may extirpate the former, he may erre (as many thouſands have done before him) and deſtroy the latter.

But the former is exhibited unto us by the expreſſe precept of Chriſt.
Ergo.

Argument fifth, from *Acts* 5. 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40.

If the argument and counſell of the learned *Gamaliel* did ſo farre prevaile with the people of the *Jewes*, as that they did not (although before they had conſulted ſo to do) ſlay the Apoſtles, leaſt they ſhould therein be found fighters againſt God. Then no Chriſtian Magiſtrate whatſoever, &c. ought to perſecute or put men to death for Judgements ſake, leaſt they alſo ſhould be found guilty of the ſame offence.

But the counſell and argument of *Gamaliel* had ſuch eſteeme and reception among the people of the *Jewes*, as that they did not proceed to execution according to their conſultations.
Ergo

Argu-

Argument ſixth, from *Heb.* 4. 12.

If the word of God of it ſelfe be ſo exceeding quick and powerfull, and ſharper then a two edged ſword, to divide between the joynts and the marrow, and to pierce to the ſecret thoughts and intents of the heart, to reduce men to the obedience of the truth. Then the Chriſtian Magiſtrates materiall ſword, *viz.* his civill authoritie is altogether uſeleſſe to the attainment thereof.

But it is evident from the very words of the text, that the former is undoubtedly true.

Ergo.

Argument ſeventh, from *Acts* 26. 9, 10, 11.

If *Paul* when he was ſo zealouſly blinde in his unregenerate eſtate (before he was converted) did make ſuch havock of the Church of Chriſt, as that he did impriſon and perſecute even to the very Death the true profeſſors thereof, and therein he did perſecute not the members onely, but Chriſt himſelfe, and if after his converſion in his regenerate eſtate we never reade that he did ever perſecute men in the like nature, but made it an aggravation of his ſins, that he was before a perſecuter, a blaſphemer, and an injurious perſon. Then no Chriſtian Magiſtrate whatſoever, &c. ought to impriſon, perſecute, or put to Death upon that account.

But the former is evident and undoubtedly true from the very words of the Text.

Ergo.

Argument eighth, from 2 *Tim.* 4. 1. and from *Titus* 1. 9, 10, 11.

If the Miniſters of Chriſt who are imployed in the preaching of the Goſpel, muſt ſtop the mouthes of gainſayers, onely by ſound doctrine, by reproofes, and by exhortations. Then the Chriſtian Magiſtrate hath nothing to do, to interpoſe by his civill authoritie, to ſtop the mouthes, to compell or perſecute the perſons who are oppoſers thereof.

But from the very words of the Texts the Major is evidently proved. *Ergo.*

Argument ninth, from *Titus* 3. 10, 11.

If an heretique after the firſt and ſecond admonition (according to the

the Judgement of St. *Paul*) is to be rejected and not persecuted; Then the Christian Magistrate goes beyond his limits, when by his civill authoritie he doth persecute, compell, or imprison men upon that account.

But the former is undeniable from the forequoted place.

Ergo.

Argument tenth, from *Eph.* 6. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17.

If the breast-plate of righteousnesse, the Gospel of peace, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation (which is the word of God) be the whole armour of God, which we are exhorted to put on, and wherewith being cloathed, wee shall be able to stand against the wiles of the Devill, and shall be able thereby to quench all the fiery darts of Satan; Then the Christian Magistrates materiall sword in his civill authoritie, is altogether excluded and useless for the accomplishment of all their holy ends and purposes.

But the former is clearly exhibited unto us from the very words of the Text to be onely true.

Ergo.

Argument eleventh, from 2 *Tim.* 2. 24, 25, 26.

If the servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, and in meekenesse must instruct those that oppose themselves, if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth. Then no Christian Magistrate whatsoever, &c. ought (if he will be the servant of the Lord, and be mercifull, even as his Heavenly Father is mercifull) to use any violent meanes, or coercive power to bring men to the acknowledgement thereof.

But the Major is true, *viz.* That the servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men, &c.

Ergo.

Argument twelfth, from 2 *Cor.* 10. 4, 5.

If the weapons which the Apostle used in his spirituall warfare, were not carnall, but mighty through God, for the pulling downe of strong holds, and casting downe imaginations, and every high thing that did exalt it selfe against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivitie every high thought to the obedience of Christ. Then all the carnall weapons, *viz.* the materiall swords or civill authorities of all Chri-

ſtian Magiſtrates whatſoever, &c. are but vaine, uſeleſſe, and ridiculous for the accompliſhment thereof.

But the weapons which the Apoſtle uſed were not carnall but ſpirituall and mightie, for the effecting the ends for the which they were ordained, &c.

Ergo.

You ſee now Gentlemen, that according as I before intimated, I have produced all my arguments from the Monuments of the new Teſtament Records, and indeed I finde (ſo far as it hath pleaſed God to give me an inſpection thereinto) that the whole currant of the Scriptures run directly into this Channell, namely, That your worke in the Miniſtery of the Goſpel in bringing ſoules to ſalvation by Jeſus Chriſt, conſiſts onely in exhortations, reproofes, and ſound doctrine, to ſtop the mouthes of gain-ſayers. And if ſuch arguments will not prevaile, then alas poore ſoules are in a loſt condition. And then it is not your impriſonments, your perſecutions, your exquiſite tortures and violent Deaths, that will gaine any thing upon them upon the former account. And indeed not without very good reaſon; For the great God of Heaven and Earth in his ſervice and to his inſtitutions requires a voluntary and willing (and not a compulſive and ſervile, which at beſt is but hypocriticall) obedience, and that becauſe the advantage is not properly to him, but the concernment redounds at length to our owne ſoules. Neither doe I finde throughout the whole Scripture the leaſt ſyllable of compulſion recommended either to Magiſtrates or Miniſters (no not under the old Covenant, although we finde that after tranſgreſſion many by Gods ſpeciall command were put to Death as violaters thereof) for the accompliſhment of theſe ends and purpoſes. And here by the way it is worth your obſervation, That under the Law there was no coercive power uſed (although under the Goſpel you have procured the Magiſtrates ſword for the recovery of them) to compell any man to pay tythes, which was then due (*Jure Divino*) to the Prieſts and Levites; But thoſe that were Delinquents therein were curſed by God himſelfe, as we finde *Mala.* 3. 9. So alſo now under the Goſpel a convenient and competent maintenance is yours *Jure Divino* (although you have no command but the quite contrary to compel any man thereunto.) And thoſe that doe refuſe and are Delinquents in this particular, it is either becauſe you are not true Miniſters, or they are not true Members of Jeſus Chriſt. But if I am miſtaken in many of theſe particulars, and come ſhort in my arguments in relation to the premiſes, I will

will assure you I am not so averse and obstinate in my Principles, but better Arguments from Scripture and Reason will silence me in my present judgement. And therefore if you are able to satisfie me and convince me therein, I shall very gladly peruse, whatever you shall expose to publick view in order thereunto. And if satisfactory I shall with all demonstrations of honour, respect, and civillity make an ingenious and gratefull recognition (wherein also of my present apprehensions I shall make an ingenious recantation) unto you of such an obligation. But if you are not able by Scripture demonstrations and solid reasons to convince me, and thereupon pass it over in silence. I will then entertain so much Charity concerning you, as to presume that you grant my Arguments.

And now most Reverend, and much esteemed Fathers, having proceeded thus far with you, let me here in the fear of the Lord but ask you (I beseech you pardon my plainess herein) these few ensuing interrogations.

First, whether if you had lived in the days of Queen *Mary* (of deplorable and unhappy memory) you would not have been willing to have lived peaceably and quietly under her Government, and would not have made (according as the Scripture directeth you; 1 *Tim.* 2. 1. 2.) supplications, prayers, and intercessions unto God in her behalfe (whereby you might have lead a quiet and peaceable life in all Godliness and honesty) so that you might have had the liberty of your conscience in the profession of your Religion.

Secondly, Whether you do think that ever the Protestant Religion is likely to take footing among the blind *Mahometans* in *Turkey*, so long as that Law remains in force and put in execution, *viz. That it is death for any man to dispute their Religion.*

Thirdly, Whether ever the true Protestant Religion be ever likely to gain upon the *Italian* and *Spanish* borders, so long as those persecutions, inquisitions, and bloody tortures are executed against the true professors thereof.

Fourthly, Whether ever the Protestant Religion had been likely to have been among us as it is (blessed be God though not in that purity as it may be) at this day. Had it not pleased God to raise

up ſuch Magiſtrates as did aboliſh that moſt Diabollicall practice, and inſtitution of perſecuting, and Butchering the true profeſſors thereof.

But in aſmuch as I have lately peruſed a paſſage in the preface of a Book(which itſeems by the zeal of ſome learned perſons is now extant in the Engliſh tongue) that is ſo directly pertinent to theſe queſtions in hand. I think it worth my pains here to inſert it and preſent it to your ſerious conſiderations. The Authors words are theſe, *viz.*

What is it (ſay they) that keeps *Mahomets* Religion in *Turkey* alive, but that it is death to diſpute it ? And what keeps the *Popes* intereſt up in *Spain* and other Countries but inquiſitions and tortures which are executed on thoſe who deny his ſupreamacy, and argue againſt his Religion? And what is it that will keep *England* from ever having the knowledge of the truth flouriſh within its Dominions and Territories, but hea:kning to thoſe that call themſelves Miniſters, who rather then they will part with their reputation in the world and their fat Benefices, will cry down the greateſt truths for Blaſphemies ; as it is too apparent in theſe our days, otherwiſe how is it that notwithſtanding our Lord Jeſus Chriſt ſaith. *He that will be my Diſciple muſt deny himſelfe and take up his Croſs daily, &c.* and through much tribulation muſt enter into the Kingdom of God, they will rather alter their Religion from Epiſcopacy to Presbitery, and to Epiſcopacy (or any other Religion that the State and the generality of men are of) again, (ſo they may live at eaſe, and have their bodies well pampered) then be a Diſciple of Jeſus Chriſt upon ſuch tearms ; yea, and rather then they will enter into the Kingdome through tribulation and perſecution, they will maintain ſuch a Doctrine , and ſtand up for ſuch a Religion ; the profeſſion whereof ſhall never expoſe them to ſuffering for it : yea, and if they cannot maintain it by Scripture or reaſon, they will (as much as in them lyes) procure the aſſiſtance of the civill Magiſtrate to enforce it upon the people, though it be againſt their conſciences, which if we did but well conſider it is a ſufficient Argument to evince the falſeneſs of their Religion,it being ſo unlike to the Religion of Jeſus Chriſt and his Apoſtles, of whom we never read that they deſired the civill Magiſtrate to protect them, or to eſtabliſh their Religion by force upon the people : for that indeed is but (at beſt) the way to make men Hypocrites, in that the moſt of men will rather imbrace

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a Religion againſt their conſciences, then to ſuffer any thing for Religion ſo farre they, but I proceed to another queſtion.

Fifthly, Why are you not as vigilant and forward in perſecuting and puniſhing men for drunkenneſs, adultery, fornication, revellings, uncleanneſs, *&c.* as you are for errors and hereſies in regard you find, *Gal.* 5. 20, 21. that the one is enumerated among the works of the fleſh, as well as the other? But here by the way, you may pleaſe to take notice that it is too well known, that of ſuch members as the former, many of your pariſh Churches have been conſtituted, and ſuch may ſwear, revell, and be drunk, and yet ſleep in a whole skin (and not ſo much as ſuffer excommunication) when as to be latter it hath been counted a Capitall Crime, and to be ſure he ſhall not (if you have had the power in your hands) eſcape ſcot free, nay moreover it hath been obſerved by ſome who are able to give an ample teſtimony thereof; That although you will preach moſt notably in your Sermons upon the Sabbath day againſt drunkenneſs, revellings, and the like; yet no ſooner hath the Sabbath been over, but ſome of you (God forbid that I ſhould ſay all, for I know many of you are very pious, devout men, and exceeding circumſpect in your lives and converſations) have been the firſt Ringleaders to begin the week in order to the accompliſhment of ſuch vices. I know I have touched the quick in this particular, but yet I am not aſhamed to write it, but I would have thoſe that are guilty herein to be aſhamed of ſuch actions, and let them fear and tremble when they read thoſe Scriptures, *Rom.* 2. 21, 22. and *Eze.* 38. 8. and 34. 10. when the loſs of ſo many ſouls muſt at the laſt day be required at their hands.

Sixthly, Whether it be not a Diabollicall Straragem to ſeduce men firſt into erroneous Principles and then poſſeſs them with a conceit of the infallibility thereof, and afterwards ſtir them up to hedge in their Church (not with the Law of the moſt high God, with which every true Church is incloſed) with the civil Magiſtrates ſword to fortifie themſelves againſt all oppoſitions, whereby he may thereby in all ages of the world make a great defection from the knowledge and worſhip of the true God.

Having now layd down theſe few ſober queſtions, it will be alſo here worth your obſervation what ſome men (and thoſe very intelligent and pious perſons) have taken notice of, *viz.* That after the generall

generall revolt of the Nations to Idolatry ſince the coming of Chriſt, and making a defection from the worſhip and knowledge of the true God, yet ſince that reformation in *Martin Luthers* time (who then in ſundry poynts of Religion gave his holineſſe the Pope a moſt deadly wound) to this very day truth by little & little hath ſtill gained ground. And they ſay that Epiſcopacy when firſt erected here in *England*, in the booke of common prayer was Popery refined; And after that *Presbytery* was *Epiſcopacy* refined, and after that *Independency* was *Presbytery* refined, &c. And if this be true I hope at length (when all the miſts and fogs of perſecution inquiſions and tortures (which are the dregs of the Romiſh Religion) are blowne away) we ſhall arrive at a perfect day. And indeed if we will but conſult with the records of by-paſt generations; the Hiſtory of former times will abundantly manifeſt this very truth. As for inſtance. Our Forefathers (I meane thoſe of the *Epiſcopall* perſwaſion) were the men, whoſe fame ſtands upon eternall records (as well as in the tranſitory volumes of periſhing paper) for their zeale and courage in the cauſe of Chriſt, in enduring ſuch exquiſite tortures (I am afraid many now adayes would be very cold in that particular, if it ſhould pleaſe God to call them to ſuch a Baptiſme) in the bloudy Raigne of Queene *Mary*, even for conſcience ſake, yet herein was the defection of thoſe that did ſurvive them, that no ſooner did it pleaſe God to raiſe them up a deliverer (even Queene *Elizabeth* of bleſſed memory) but they did afterwards perſecute (and put many to death) upon the ſame account.

Againe, our Forefathers (I meane thoſe of the *Presbyterian* perſwaſion) were the men who alſo (though not in ſo large an extent) are upon the ſame records with the former for ſuffering baniſhment under the tyranny of the late Biſhops, even for conſcience ſake, yet herein was their defection alſo, that no ſooner did it pleaſe God that they were ſafely arrived in *New-England*, and had erected a Government of their owne, but they did more rigirouſly and more ſharply then the Biſhops themſelves perſecute (and do to this very day, and ſometimes put to death alſo) all non-conformiſts upon the ſame account.

Againe, You which are alive at this day of the *Presbyterian* perſwaſion deſerve perpetually to be enroaled in the records of everlaſting fame, for your courage and magnanimitie, in oppoſing the late Biſhops in their Antichriſtian tyranny, together with all the reliques of that Prelaticall and ſuperſtitious Hierarchy. But yet herein was your defection that no ſooner did it pleaſe God to raiſe you up ſuch Magiſtrates

(*viz.*

(*viz.* that once renowned and moſt famous long Parliament) as did countenance you therein, but you did immediately (as ſoone as you had the power in your owne hands) perſecute alſo upon the ſame account. And pray (if a man may aſſume the boldneſſe to aske you) what did you in thoſe dayes, but only remove one ſuperſtitious forme of worſhip to ſet up another (and you are now againe endeavouring might and maine to erect it as a ſecond *Babel*, which if I am not very much miſtaken in the genious of the times, it will be ſooner blaſted then before, and ſo will all impoſed formes whatſoever) whereas had you been then ſo prudent as to have deſired the Parliament onely to have aboliſhed that coercive power as did compell men to the former, then if yours had been better and more ſpirituall, that of it ſelfe by degrees would have fallen to the ground. And I am perſwaded ſhould our preſent Governours now but connive at that way of worſhip, as the old Protector did (which made thoſe of that perſwaſion (till his *Engliſh* inquiſition came up, which I do verily believe was one cauſe of his ſo ſudden expiration) to have charitable thoughts of him, and thereupon were willing to give him civill obedience to his uſurped authoritie) there would be but very few (onely ſuch pragmatique fellows as have [illegible] the applauſe of the people) would put it in practiſe in their parochiall Congregations.

And here I muſt confeſs it is a plaine dilemma to me, That the civill Magiſtrate hath nothing to doe in matters of Religion; when as the Parliament in aſſembling you to conſult thereupon, they did thereby acknowledge their owne inſufficiency therein. But however they were reſolved to ratifie, confirme and eſtabliſh (whether it were either by fire or fagot) whatever you ſhould propoſe to them in order thereunto. And moreover in thoſe dayes it was obſerved that you were ſo exceeding covetous (and indeed that ſin many do obſerve is the predominant ſin among thoſe of your perſwaſion) that if you had but an order of Parliament, you would make no bones (this I will aſſure you will alwayes ſtand as a continuall blot to your perpetuall infamy) to go and take poſſeſſion and turne out wives and children, and Miniſter and all (of thoſe of the *Epiſcopall* perſwaſion) out of houſe and home (even to beg their bread from the charitie of good diſpoſed and well-minded people) which was as much his right (if choſen by the conſent of the Pariſh, and they willing to accept of them for their Miniſter) as an hundred pound *per annum* is any of yours if conferr'd upon you by him who hath the right of donation. Hence it was, I preſume, came that character

racter of a *Presbyterian* which a Gentlewoman once told me (ſuppoſing me to be one of that perſwaſion) that ſhee gave in the beginning of theſe times to a Gentleman that was at dinner with her, which was as followeth; The Gentleman it ſeemes among other ſerious diſcourſe was crying up ſuch a Miniſter for a very Godly, religious, and conſcientious man; whereupon the Gentlewoman replyed (which if it were the product of her owne genious, ſhee deſerves to be eſteemed in my apprehenſion for ingenuitie the non-ſuch of her ſex) that ſince the late reformation ſhee did by no meanes ſo well like the word Godly, but yet a pious devout man ſhee loved with her ſoule; but moreover ſhee ſayd, that as to that Godly Miniſter he then ſpake of, for her part ſhee was of another perſwaſion, and her reaſon was becauſe he was a *Presbyterian*, or old *Puritan*; whereunto the Gentleman replyed; Pray Madam, why have you ſuch uncharitable thoughts of them? I beſeech you let me receive ſome ſatisfaction herein; what is a *Presbyterian*? Whereunto ſhee ſuddenly gave him a reſponſe, that ſhee could give him ſundry definitions of ſuch a perſon, but in ſhort, he might pleaſe to take him thus; * *viz.* He was one that would not drive out his owne hoggs out of his Neighbours Corne upon a Sunday, which in plaine *Engliſh* is thus, ſayd ſhee; He was one that would ſtraine at a gnat, but he would ſwallow a Cammell. Thus it ſeemes ſhee knew by experience, or elſe certainly ſhee would not have caſt ſuch an aſperſion upon men of your profeſſion.

* *The definition of a* Presbyterian *or old* Puritan.

But inaſmuch as there is another objection levied againſt you, *viz.* That although many of your auditors, are ſometimes convinced that many of your doctrines which you endeavour to impoſe upon them are ſomewhat irrationall (among the reſt I will here inſtance in one which is alledged againſt you, *viz.* That you doe not truly obſerve that golden rule in the Goſpel, *Mat.* 7. 12. whenas you endevour perſecution againſt others for conſcience ſake, and yet plead for a tolleration for your ſelves upon the ſame account) yet to anticipate them herein, you will tell them, that in things to be believed, they muſt ſubject their Reaſon to their faith; and not faith to their carnall (as you call it) and corrupted Reaſon. Wherefore I am reſolved before I leave you, to inſert here a few lines more (requeſting your patience in the peruſall) in vindication thereof. And here by the way, you may pleaſe to take notice that I have lately peruſed a Booke intituled, *Diſſertatio de Pace, &c.* wherein is elegantly and acutely argued, that not ſo much a bad opinion, as a bad life, excludes a Chriſtian out of the kingdome of

of Heaven, and also that those who passe amongst us under the name of Heretiques, are notwithstanding to be tollerated. The Author whereof it seems had such a charitable opinion of the *Socinians* (a sect I presume so farre from your charitable conceptions, that you conclude an impossibilitie of their salvation) that he purposely penn'd the same as an Apologie for them; not that he approved of their Doctrine (for in his Booke he once and againe disownes it) but because he was perswaded, that if the harsh judgements of men were once mitigated concerning the most odious opinion of all the heat of that bitter zeale wherewith Christians are generally incited to persecute dissenters in Religion, would by degrees evaporate. And moreover, he was induced to have such charitable thoughts of them upon this account (and if you please to peruse the ninth Chapter of that Booke, it will there more largely and plainly appeare) even from their modest and sober reasonings and suspition, that in many heads of Doctrine (in severall ages of the Church) plaine words were wrested to forraign and Philosophicall senses, whilst the Fathers did with ingenious comments tack the mysteries of their Philosophy to the Word of God, that they might not seeme to have learned in vaine. For what should be the cause, say they, that touching the received explication of the holy Trinitie (*Plato* and *Trismegistus* speak more clearly) then the sacred Scripture? or what reason should there be, why the Scripture should more timorously and obscurely deliver so holy a Mystery, then the foresaid Philosophers? These and the like things (saith he) though they doe not acquit them of errour, yet doe they cleare them from the imputation of rashnesse. And here Gentlemen I could aske you a question concerning the holy Trinitie, which I believe neither you nor all the Divines in *England* (should you lay your heads together to consult) could hardly give a satisfactory answer thereunto, *viz.* That if it be such a fundamentall, and such an infallible truth, without the believing whereof (as you doe affirme) a man cannot possibly be saved. What is the reason then that the *Jewes* the antient people of God did not believe this Doctrine, and worship three persons in one God as well as you; Certainly, all will confesse, that *unto them* (as the Apostle intimateth, *Rom.* 3. 2.) *were committed the whole Oracles of God*, and yet this great truth was obscured and hidden from them; which makes many to scruple and suppose that your Doctrine of the Trinitie, *viz.* Trinitie in Unitie and Unitie in Trinitie, three distinct persons in one inseparable and undivided essence, is built (not upon the foun-

dation of the Prophets and Apostles, but) onely upon the inventions of men, which at best is but a ruinous and tottering foundation. And here againe I cannot but take notice of another Booke which I have also perused, intituled, *The Blasphemer slaine with the sword of the Spirit*, penn'd by a very learned and judicious man, in answer to what another very learned and judicious man had written upon this abstruse and sublime controversie concerning the holy Trinitie (although should I here name the person, I presume you would immediately reply, that he is condemned as Hetrodox in his Judgement by most of the ablest Ministers in *England* (*sed affirmantis est probare*) yet this let me tell you, that as to his life and conversation, there is not a man of you is able to say black is his eye) wherein before he comes to give a direct answer to his adversaries arguments (being unable to confute them by plaine Scripture and Reason) he endeavours to possesse his Readers with one consideration that will utterly enervate every one of them (although it is here worth your observation, that the Author whom he so bitterly enveighs against, had anticipated him before from making such an objection, yet he takes not the least notice thereof) *viz.* That when he tells you (saith he) that the Spirit speaketh from God, heareth from God, receiveth from God, is sent of God, is the gift of God, changeth place, maketh intercession for us, &c. and from thence drawes his conclusion; The answer in a word is this (and it would suffice saith he, to stop the mouth of any sober minded man) That all these things are spoken of the holy Ghost improperly, and must be so expounded. From whence he doth acknowledge, That if these places of Scripture from whence his Antagonist did produce his arguments were to be taken in a proper sense, as they are plainly layd downe in the very letter of the Text, then his assertions were of validitie and unanswerable. And that they are not to be so taken, it is onely his bare assertions, and hath no other ground to say so, but onely his pre-conceived opinion (as the Author himselfe whom he answers hath sayd) without the least proofe; Wherefore when first I perused his Booke, I thought it was but a very weake kinde of arguing to satisfie one that did really scruple in that poynt; just as if a man should alledge according to the plaine Text of Scripture, that our Blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ was crucified at *Jerusalem*, and another should deny the same, and affirm that he was crucified at *Rome* or at *Constantinople*, and should say that although the letter of the Scripture doth affirm that he was crucified at

Jeru-

Jerusalem, yet it was not so, but it must be understood mystically, figuratively, or spiritually, and not properly, and should then alledg that place, *Rev.* 11. 8. for proof thereof, when as that very text if rightly examined and considered, would sufficiently convince any rationall man in the world from making such a vain and frivolous interpretation. But waving this digression (desiring your pardon in the prolixity thereof) I shall now proceed to demonstrate what can be alledged in vindication of right reason, to be admitted in matters of Faith. And here I shall not give you the bare conceptions of my own brain (which I acknowledge is very weak in this particular) but rather the judgement of one who is far more able then my selfe, and hath written upon this point: And herein I shal be very succinct and give you only one passage which I find in the Preface of this Book (if you desire further satisfaction in vindication of right reason, I shall refer you to the Book it selfe, the Title whereof is *Brevis Disquisitio, or a brief enquiry touching a better way then is commonly made use of to refute Papists, and to reduce Protestants to a certainty and unity in Religion*) his words are these, *viz.* Nevertheless there will not be wanting some, and they such as profess themselvs great zelots in the Protestant cause, who inlikelihood will stomack, at the publication of this little Treatise, because reason is therein (and that not without evident necessity) much cryed up. My desire therefore is, that such persons would but consider what the holy Scripture saith in this behalfe: Namely how *Paul*, *Rom.* 12. 1. calls the service which Christians are to exhibit unto God a rationall, or reasonable service. And *Peter* 1 *Epist.* 2. 2. Stileth the Word of the Gospell which he preached, sincere rationall milk (for so the originall hath it, as any one who is skill'd in that tongue, and looketh into the Greek context, may perceive.) And Chapter 3. 15. he saith, be ready always to make an Apology unto every one that asketh you a reason, concerning the hope that is in you with meekness and fear, which passage clearly inimateth, that as there is no incongruity for others to require a reason, for our hope in Christ, so we Christians are above all other professors whatsoever, obliged to be very rationall: For to make an Apology or defence in the behalf of so abstruce and sublime a Doctrine as ours is, requireth a more then ordinary improvement of reason. This being so, it may seem strange why so great a number of Protestant Ministers should make reason a common Theam to disclaim against giving to it (without warrant of Scripture) the name of corrupt reason, and car-

naſt reaſon, and other the like Elogies. But the truth is, they themſelves hold many abſurd, ridiculous, and unreaſonable opinions, and ſo know right well, that if men once begin to make uſe of their reaſon, and bring the Doctrines that are commonly taught to the touchſtone of the Scripture explained and managed in a rationall way, their Tenets and reputation with the people will ſoon be laid in the duſt. For the prevention whereof they in their Pulpits perpetually cry out againſt reaſon, and I would they did not againſt Morall honeſty too, of which two precious and profitable things there is ſo great a ſcarcity, that we may juſtly impute the miſeries under which the Chriſtian world hath a long time groaned, to the want of them. Wherefore let ſuch Miniſters hence forward, either leave off clamouring againſt reaſon, or no more open their mouths againſt Papiſts, and their opinion about Tranſubſtantiation; For whoſoever ſhall ſift the controverſie between Papiſts and Proteſtants concerning it; ſhall find that the principall, if not the only ground why we reject it, is becauſe it is repugnant unto reaſon. But if Tranſubſtantiation is to be diſclaimed becauſe contrary to reaſon; why ſhall not all other unreaſonable Doctrines upon the ſame account be exploded, eſpecially ſeeing there is ſcarce any one of them, can plead ſo plauſible a colour of Scripture for it ſelfe as that can ſo far he. And indeed no marvell that we have ſo many horrid portentious and unreaſonable opinions in the midſt of us when as reaſon is ſo much cryed down and exclaimed againſt. And the truth of it is, what opinion may not a man be enduced to believe if it be generally received that right reaſon is not to be admitted in matters of Faith. And as I have heard ſome ſay that there is a Miniſter in the City of *London* doth deny the very Reſurrection of the body. And indeed what Fundamentall truth is there that he may not deny upon the ſame account. If he may make ſo bold with ſacred writ (as it is ſayd, he doth too frequently in his expoſitions) as upon the moſt plain obvious litterall texts thereof to put his figurative myſticall allegoricall and nonſenſicall interpretation: well Gentlemen, I have done, only take this with you in the concluſion. That to worſhip a falſe God inſtead of the true is a Diabollicall deluſion, ſo likewiſe to worſhip the true God in a falſe manner (*utrum horum mavis accipe*, for they are tearms equivolent) is a Doctrine alſo of Satans inſtitution, to whom if Saint *Paul* were now upon earth he would deliver you up that you might learn not to blaſpheme (for whereas you charge others with blaſphemous Doctrines, if all the chaffe were to be ſifted upon

due

due examination, you your ſelves I fear would be found the greater Blaſphemers.)But I having no ſuch commiſſion I ſhal recommend you to the care and protection of the moſt high God, deſiring that it would pleaſe his Majeſty to grant unto you the Spirit of wiſedom, the ſpirit of illumination, (to diſcern between the Spirit of truth , and the ſpirit of error)the ſpirit of meekneſſe and of true love and charity towards your diſſenting Brethren, that all wrath, contention, emulation, ſtrife, and perſecuting principles may be layd aſide and for ever buried in the embers of oblivion, and ſo (Men, Brethren, and Fathers) Grace be with your Spirits, *Amen:*

To the Supream Authority of this Nation, The Commons of England Aſſembled in Parliament.

The humble Petition of a true friend and faithfull Servant to this Common-wealth.

Humbly Sheweth,

THat whereas in the year of our Lord, 1641. the people of this Common-wealth (by their Truſtees Aſſembled in Parliament) were inforced to take up Arms in defence of their juſt rights and liberties(born in civills and ſpiritualls) againſt the encroachments and uſurpation of the late King, which by virtue of his Soveraign power and authority, and by the inſtigation of his evill Counſellours had annexed to his Crown, and would have ſtill retained them unto this day (had not an extraordinary providence interpoſed) as his own prerogative. But whereas after many ſharp conteſts and battles fought on either ſide, and after many ſolemn appeals made to Heaven to decide the controverſie, it pleaſed the Lord of Hoſts, the God of Battle at length to decide the quarrell on the peoples ſide, by the totall vanquiſhing the King and his party. So that hereupon (by the good providence of God) the good people of this Nation, were

were in a fair tendency again after their long continued wars (by the abolition of Monarchy) towards a true settlement, and in relation to the premises (as to the thing contended for) were instated into a perfect freedom. But yet notwithstanding Satan that most implacable enemy of the souls of men, envying our so much desired happiness, herein hath since so exceedingly divided us (by sowing the seeds of discord and division amongst us) into so many severall Sects and parties (each hating and contemning one another even to the very death, for no other cause then some small difference in Judgement) purposely to keep us from true love and charity, that so we may at length destroy and consume one another, whereupon your humble Petitioner being much grieved and almost overwhelmed in spirit (by reason of our intestine devisions) for his native Countries bleeding miseries (which is now reduced so exceeding low and poor for want of a trade, that it lyes even at the last gasp crying out for a true settlement) it pleased the Lord out of his goodness towards him to communicate unto his poor understanding a very expedient way to reconcile, satisfie, and to secure the interest of all these parties together, and therefore thought it not only requisite but also necessary to expose it to publick view. And whereas you are the persons which are the only visible Supream power of this Nation, who must be instrumentall herein to cement us together by your civill Authority. He hath taken the humble boldness to present the same unto you, & doth most humbly beseech you, that as you tender the Nations interest and preservation together with your own (for all your interests are as much concerned therein as any persons whatsoever) that you would forthwith be pleased to take the same into your serious considerations. And if after your perusall thereof, you shall deem it worthy of your acceptations, and thereupon order the insertment of it into your publick intelligence as a recognition thereof, he hath his desire (hoping thereby that you will speedily apply your selves to the accomplishment thereof.)

And your Petitioner (as in duty obliged

for all Christian Magistrates)

shall ever pray, &c.

To

To the Right Honourable the Worthy Representatives and Truſtees of the People, the Commons of England Aſſembled in Parliament.

My Lords and Gentlemen,

IF that be a certain Truth (as moſt certain it is, which is alſo a known Maxim in the Law) *Salus Populi ſuprema lex*; and if that alſo be as true (which is a Maxime equivolent with the former) that good Laws mannaged by good Governours are the Walls and Bulwarks of a Nation for its continual preſervation; Then certainly it will unavoidably follow (without ſtraining the Premiſes) that that which is contrary thereunto (*viz.* bad Laws put into the hands of Male-adminiſtrators) muſt needs be the Rams and Batteries for its continual Ruine and Deſolation. This then being premiſed (moſt Worthy and Grave Senators) be pleaſed to know, that although I am a ſtranger to your Perſons (as you alſo are as ſtrangers unto me) yet having for a long ſeaſon been much perplexed in my thoughts, and grieved in my ſpirit for my Native Countries bleeding miſeries, which by reaſon of our inteſtine diviſions (for want of true Love and Charity one toward another) is now reduced ſo exceeding low and poor for want of a Trade, that it lies even at the laſt gaſp crying out for a True Settlement. It pleaſed God at length out of his goodneſs towards me, to communicate unto my poor underſtanding, the onely probable Way and Means for the accompliſhment thereof. And whereas you are the onely Viſible Supream Authority of this Nation, who muſt be inſtrumental therein for the bringing it to perfection; I was even conſtrained to make my Addreſſe unto you, and to beſeech you, that if you have any zeal to the Glory of God, or

any bowels of compaſſion toward your Native Countries preſervation, that you would then ſpeedily take my enſuing lines into your ſerious conſideration; And oh that I could (I ſpeak it from my very ſoul) but effectually perſwade every one of you to embrace the Counſel herein propoſed, which if aſſented unto and accompliſht, certain I am, we might yet be (if the decree be not gone out againſt us for our deſtruction) the moſt happy flouriſhing Nation this day under the Sun; And therefore as Motives and inducements hereunto, give me leave (in the Fear of the Lord) in the firſt place but to ask you, What was it that made the Long Parliament ſo Famous and ſo Renowned (in the eſteem of good and Godly men) when they were firſt Aſſembled, but onely their Aſſerting and owning the Juſt Rights and Liberties of the People (both in Civils and Spirituals) againſt the encroachments and uſurpation of the late King and his Tyrannical Government; for the which you may well remember it made us not account our Lives and Eſtates pretious for their ſakes. And truly I may ſay (as a Pious and Learned man did once ſay to the Tyrant *Oliver*) Liberty was that Motto in their enſigns which encouraged the Souldiers of Chriſt to fight and pray under them, and for the which I make no queſtion, victory came ſo often and lighted upon their Banners.

It is true Gentlemen, (and I preſume your ſelves are not ignorant thereof) that immediately before the Long Parliaments diſſolution, many were the reproaches of the World (which was almoſt in every mans mouth that one did meet withal) wherewith they did beſmear them and revile them; And I preſume alſo you will not eſcape ſcot-free from ſcandalous aſpertions upon the ſame account; But for my own part, I ſhall not from ſuch Male-contented perſons (who do not know themſelves what they would have) learn to ſpeak evil of you, but wherein you do aſſert Good & Righteous Principles, I ſhall Honour & Eſteem you, but if on the contrary, you muſt give me leave to tell you, that I ſhall not be afraid to declare againſt you, you know that there were ſome in the former Houſe that were great promoters of Oaths & Engagments wch if Oaths ſimply conſidered in relation to that wch is juſt & good, I was willing therein with all my Soul to concede with them (in being

being that, as you will find in the Contents of this Book, that I do mainly assert and plead for) but as for their Oath of Abjuration, I must tell you that I did abhor and detest the very Cogitations thereof, it being in my apprehension down right against the very providence of Almighty God, for who knows I say but that the time may come wherein all our Neigbour Nations may combine together to assist that exiled person to invade your Territories (but if we were united within our selves, I should think it altogether impossible) and if their Armies over-power us, we must then be enforced to accept of him upon any terms for our present preservation; And who knows again, had they not been dissolved, but the time might have come, wherein the *Episcopal* and *Sectarian* parties (who some say, were then both dis-satisfied and disobliged in regard of their adhering to the Neutral and Rigid *Presbyterian*) might not have combined together to have Courted the King upon such terms as is here inserted, who I am perswaded (poor Gentleman would gladly come in upon such propositions, and would ratifie and confirm (setting the three first Articles a side) these fundamentals. I have seen in my remembrance as unprobable things as these come to pass; And I presume I need not go any further then your own house for proof thereof; And if this had come to passe, it would not have been their potent Army that could have secured them; For unless they could have raised them monies (which I fear would have been very difficult, unless they had declared just things) they would have forsaken them if *Lambert* could have paid them, (after their revolt from their obedience to supream Authority) they had not again been theirs (nor yet yours as they are at this day.) And if this once had been effected, I am perswaded these Members would have been the very scorn and dirision of the whole Nation; And although their Lives and Estates might have been thereby secured, yet I do believe had they all lived to the age of *Methusalah*, there would not one of them have ever been so much as in nomination for a future Representative; And truly Gentlemen not in the least measure to flatter them or you (a thing as averse to my constitution as Light and Darkness are contrarieties) I shall tell you my real thoughts in plain *English*, *viz.* That I had much rather

engage with the aforementioned parties, were I certain of the event, that such things would be secured and establisht as are here proposed to be foundamentals in the Government of this Nation (though I my self did perish in the expedition for the atainment thereof) then to have engaged to support either them or you in unjust and unrighteous proceedings. But I am perswaded better things of you (and things that will make for a true settlement) though I do thus speak.

In my ensuing proposals, I shall not with the zeal of *Martin Luther* make my appeals unto you for a General Counsel, nor yet with the zeal of *Arminius* petition your Honors for a National Synod, whereby to establish *Ecclesiastick* sanctions by your civil Authority, (and it is not unlike, but if you please to peruse my precedent Epistle to the Ministers of *England*, you will be partly convinced, that those are things of that sublime nature which come not within your sphear to intermedle withal) least the former produce as good effects as the Counsel of *Trent*, or the latter have the same event with the *Dort* conference, or with our General Assembly at the long Parliaments first commencement. And here give me leave to tell you, (& it is worth all Christian Magistrates observation if they are willing rightly to apprehend their true interest) that the grounds of all the ruines and Devastations of the largest and most Magnificient Empiers in the World proceeded Originally by establishing such Impious Laws and Statutes as did persecute men upon that very accompt. *Nebuchadnezar* that universal Monarch establishing a most Impious and Blasphemous decree, and compelling others against their consciences to fall down and worship that golden Image which he had set up, what became of him? the Text saith, He was driven from men, and did graze with the Beasts of the field. And in his Sons reign, (who was as Impious as the Father) the Kingdom was divided and given to the *Medes* and *Persians*; This is so plain and so perspicuous a truth, that I need not stand to multiply instances in this particular. What is become of the *Romans* universal Monarchy, who did so butcher the poor Christians in the ten persecutions? And to come a little neerer home to our selves, what is become of our late persecuting Episcopacy, together with all the adjuncts of that Antichristian Hierarchy? and truly ere long I am perswaded

ſwaded by experience we ſhall ſay (although at this juncture of time they labour might and maine for the ſupremacy) what is become of our zealous perſecuting Presbytery? It was a rare and true ſaying of *Gregory Nazianzen*, who ſaith, he never ſaw any Councel have a good end, for what is the end of them but cruelty and perſecution? And when they have decreed what they think good, then they procure the Magiſtrates ſword to impoſe their decrees upon mens conſciences; and why any Church or State ſhould call Counſels to make decrees, in caſe of conſcience it cannot be defended, the Counſel of *Jeruſalem* will not warrant it, and yet that counſel was guided by an infallible ſpirit; againſt which opinion and practice, that noble Prince not long ſince King of *Bohemia* (and it is right worthy your Honors obſervation) hath written in theſe words, and notwithſtanding (ſaith he) the ſucceſs of theſe latter times, wherein ſundry opinions have been hatched about the ſubject of Religion, may make one clearly diſcern with his eye, and (as it were) touch with his finger, that according to the verity of the holy Scripture, and a maxime heretofore held by the antient Doctors of the Church, that mens conſciencs ought in no ſort to be violated, urged, or conſtrained; and whenſoever men have attempted any ſuch thing by this violent courſe, whether openly or by ſecret means, the iſſue hath been pernitious, and the cauſe of great and wonderful innovations in the Principalleſt and mightieſt Kingdoms and Countreys of all Chriſtendome, *&c.* And further his Majeſtie ſaith, ſo that once more we do proteſt before God and the whole World, that from this time forward we are firmly reſolved not to perſecute or moleſt, or ſuffer to be perſecuted or moleſted, any perſon whatſoever in matters of Religion, no not they which profeſs themſelves to be of the *Roman* Church, neither to trouble nor diſturb them in the exerciſe of their Religion, provided they live peaceably and conformably to the Laws of the States; and therefore the premiſes conſidered, theſe are not the things (my Lords and Gentlemen) which I ſhall petition you for, but in all humility it is for this; namely that you would ſettle the Goverment of theſe Nations of *England*, *Scotland* and *Ireland*, and the Dominions and Territories thereunto belonging in the way of a Free State and equal Common-

wealth, and that upon such fundamentals as you will finde herein contained; that it shall be high Treason for any person in a future Representative, which shall go about to repeal and make void the statutes thereof. And after this, that you would be pleased to determine your sitting, and before the time be expired to make provision for a free and full Parliament without any qualifications or restrictions whatsoever; wherein all parties of all perswasions (which is their undoubted birth-rights as well as yours) may be admitted to an equal participation in the Government thereof, and not as some would and did advise, whose principles are too narrow for securing the peace of these Nations, wherein since the abolition of Monarchy over the same, we are so divided in several circumstantials in relation to Worship in matters of Religion, yet do all unanimously concur and agree in the main; and therefore that difference ought not to deprive any man whatsoever (being freely chosen by the People) from his vote in Parliament. Gentlemen, what ever your conceptions are in relation to the premises, certain I am (and it is not my own single apprehension, but the judgement of thousands) you will never be secure (but alwayes Animosities, discontents and insurrections will be subject to arise for the subvertion of the Government) unless this be accomplisht; and therefore it will be of grand concernment unto you to take this seriously into your publick and private consultations.

I am not ignorant (most worthy and grave Senators) of the great Power, Trust & Confidence which the people of this Nation hath alwayes reposed in their successive Parliaments; nay such as you have had power to alter, repeal and make void any Law or Statute whatsoever; yet certainly I think, when first it pleased God to let Christianity take footing upon our English Borders, had our forefathers been so prudent (and had been such sage Polititians) as to have made some things in the constitution of their Government, (like the Laws of the *Medes* and *Persians*) unalterable, it would doubtless have saved much (if not all) of that Christian blood and vast treasure which from time to time hath been exhausted, and drawn from the veines and sinews of this Common wealth.

I know also (Right worthy and Noble Trustees) that all Laws once

once passed and enacted by you are esteemed (and that deservedly, and not without good reason) the fundamental Laws of this Nation; yet surely since there can no inconvenience happen, that some of them may be esteemed so fundamental as not to admit of any alteration, yet all others by you established may be deemed as the superstructures only in the building, and thereupon may be by future Representatives justly repealed, so often as they shall appear unto them destructive, and without mercy, and burthensome to the good people of this Common-wealth.

And therefore not to detain you any longer by a tedious and prolix introduction, I shall now proceed to declare my thoughts (with submission to your Honours grave and sage Judgements) what are those foundamental Laws which in all Ages of the World will be necessary to be inviolably preserved, to secure the peace and Tranquility of this Common-wealth.

And whereas all Laws are (or at least ought to be, and that deservedly) built upon the solid foundations and principles of right Reason, (in regard man is a rational creature, and ought not to stir one step in any act, but as he is induced thereunto by the Light thereof) although I am not ignorant, how that many Laws have been made (and are still in force, the more is the pitty) which are most unreasonable and unjust, (and such were first calculated only for the Meridian of carnal and self-interest, and therefore ought most deservedly to be exploded and repealed;) I shall therefore in laying down the foundations of the Government, give the best reasons that my slender capacity can suggest for the equity thereof.

Imprimis then, Whereas most rational men in the World do conclude that a Democracy or Popular Government, for establishing of Laws, is the best that can possibly be imagined by the apprehension of man (in regard *Solomon* himself saith, that in the multitude of Counselors there is safety) then certainly this may be the foundation stone, in order to the erecting of this most stately and magnificent building, *viz.*

1. *That the Government of these Nations of* England, Scotland *and* Ireland, *and the Dominions and Territories thereunto belonging, shall be by successive Parliaments in the way of a Free State and equal Common-wealth.*

And

And whereas the admitting of king-ſhip into the Government of theſe Nations hath alwayes been (by woful experience) deſtructive, chargeable, pernitious and dangerous, and although they were for many years owned by us and aſſented unto for our own preſervation, (in regard we could not redeem our ſelves out of that bondage) yet they were at the firſt but only the effects of the *Norman* conqueſt; And were alwayes (as the honeſt watermen I remember told the long Parliament in their Adreſſe and congratulation to them preſented, which deſerves in my apprehenſion to be engraven on the walls of your Houſe in letters of Gold, in regard they did ſo notably aſſert therein your Parlimentary Authority) but as unatural Wenns and Bunches in the Government thereof. And whereas all ſingle perſons whatſoever have been of the like import, and although ſome ſeeming difference did appear in regard of their titular denominations, yet in *rerum natura* they were terms equivolent. And therefore there is much reaſon and great neceſſity that this be the next ſtone that ſhall be inſerted into this ſtately foundation.

2. *That no king-ſhip ſhall be exerciſed in theſe Nations, nor no ſingle perſon whatſoever ſhall be admitted to be chief Magiſtrate thereof.*

And whereas a Houſe of Lords alſo were at their firſt inſtitution but the badges and reliques of the Normon ſword, and ſerved only as a negative voice againſt the peoples juſt rights and liberties, being alwayes the great obſtructors of good Laws and ſupporters of the Arbitrary unlimitted will and pleaſure of Tyrannical Princes; ſo that I may ſay of them, as once a witty Gentlemen did ſay concerning the late Tyrant Protector & his Counſel, *viz.* As for that goodly diſtinction (ſaith he) between my Lord Protector and his Counſel, is no more then between *Oliver* and *Cromwel*; and therefore it will be very reaſonable and neceſſary that this be the third ſtone in this goodly foundation, *viz.*

3. *That there ſhall be no houſe of Peeres.*

And whereas it is by all men univerſally eſteemed very unreaſonable, that Legiſlators ſhould be Law-executioners, and therefore I need not ſtand to plead for the neceſſity and equity thereof, only this I may ſay, that is contrary to the pro-

ceed-

ceedings of the Moſt High God Himſelf, who will not paſſe ſentence at the laſt day in his own Perſon, but by his *Vice-Roy*, even by that Man the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, whom he hath appointed Heir of all things, and by whom alſo he will Judge both quick and dead; and therefore I will now joyn it to thoſe already laid in manner and form as followeth, *viz.*

4. *That the Supream Legiſlative Power of theſe Nations, and the executive Adminiſtration thereof ſhall be diſtinct and not in the ſame hands.*

And whereas many mens lives and eſtates have been moſt unjuſtly and illegally taken away, and thereupon their Families, their wives and children have been utterly undone, and reduced even to a morſel of bread, although they have been ſeemingly taken away by pretence juſtly, even by illegal and unjuſt High Courts of Juſtice, where mens enemies have been made the Judges of the Court, this is a ſhame and a reproach to a Chriſtian Common Wealth. I know ſome will here object and ſay that the King himſelf was taken away in this nature, and what will I ſay that that action was illegal? I anſwer, in the way that it was done it was ſo, although I muſt confeſſe had the Army (when he was reduced into their hands) taken him off by a Counſel of War, the action (in regard he had appealed to the Law of Armes to decide his controverſie, and held out till the laſt, and would not accept of an agreement upon reaſonable terms) would have been far more legal and warrantable; but in regard it was done by a high hand, (I preſume an over-ruling providence.) I ſhall ſay no more, but preſſe forward in my work, and lay this ſtone, (which is contended for) the next in this goodly foundation, *viz.*

5. *That no high Courts of Juſtice ſhall be erected, and that no perſon or perſons whatſoever ſhall ſuffer in life, limb or eſtate, but by the known Laws of the Land.*

And whereas it cannot rationally be ſuppoſed, nor can it poſſibly be immagined that the people of this Common-Wealth do deſire that their Repreſentatives ſhould be exempted during the time of their Seſſion in Parliament, from any of the Laws and Statutes by them made; for although they do confer upon them ſo much honour, as when they are aſſembled within their Houſe to be their Legiſlators, yet when they are without the Houſe, they are no

more, as to matter of power, then other private persons, and therefore ought not in any respect to have such an unreasonable thing given unto them, and therefore it is very necessary and requisite that this also amongst the rest be inserted, *viz.*

6. *That no Member of Parliament of what rank or quality soever shall be exempted during the time of his session in Parliament from any of the Laws, Orders and Statutes by them made, but shall be as subject thereunto as any other person whatsoever.*

And whereas there is a Law already established and in force concerning Taxes and Impositions upon the people without their own consent; I need not say any thing here, as to the equity thereof, and therefore I shall proceed to insert it among the rest of the fundamental Stones in this stately foundation, *viz.*

7. *That no Moneys shall be raised, nor no Taxes shall be imposed upon the people of this Common-Wealth but by their own consent,* viz. *by their own Representatives duly chosen and assembled in Parliament.*

And whereas many have made very great complaints (and look upon it as a very great oppression) that they have no Trustees to represent them in Parliament, and thereupon have refused (esteeming it an unreasonable and unjust thing to be compelled thereunto) to pay any Taxes that have been levied in that nature. I presume it will be very necessary (to satisfie all men in that particular) that this also be joyned to the former, *viz.*

8. *That upon the death or seclusion of every Member of Parliament, Writs shall be immediately issued out from the Lord Keepers of the Liberties of* England *for the Election of new, that so none shall have cause to complain that they have no Trustees to represent them in Parliament.*

And whereas the Lord Paramount, the great Legislator of Heaven and earth hath prescribed Laws of his own institution to the Sons and daughters of Men, in relation to their everlasting Salvations, to whose Judgement alone we must stand or fall at the last day. And whereas it hath pleased his Majesty to free us Christians from that *Mosaical* Law which he did formerly impose upon the people of the *Jews*, and thereupon we are strongly exhorted to stand fast in that Liberty wherewith Christ had made us free, and not to be entangled again with the yoke of bondage, but to serve him in spirit and in truth, and not to be enslaved with the determinations of Counsels, Synods and Assemblies to this or that form of Worship whatsoever. And whereas the issue and consequence thereof

thereof hath been in all Ages of the World (whenever put in practise) most pernitious and dangerous, and the effusion of much blood, and at length the total ruine and desolation of the most Magnificent and most stately Empires in the World; and the reason is apparent, because in so doing they have most blasphemously intrencht upon the Peerless Majesty and Prerogative of Almighty God, Who saith to those that are his enemies and will not conform to his righteous Institutions, (and needeth not the power of any mortal Magistrate whatsoever to assist him therein) vengeance is mine, I will repay saith the Lord; And therefore certainly it will unavoidably follow from principles of solid Reason, that this also be inserted as a chief corner stone in this most stately foundation, *viz.*

9. *That no coercive power whatsoever shall be used in matters of Religion, but that all professing faith in God by Jesus Christ (though differing in Judgement in several circumstantials in the profession thereof) shall be equally protected, countenanced and encouraged, nor shall any be persecuted, molested, restrained or compelled in their exercise thereof; But all persons whatsoever offending herein shall be deemed the disturbers of the peace, and shall be proceeded against accordingly.*

And whereas humane learning in the knowledge of Languages, Arts and Sciences is an Excellent and decent ornament, and a most pretious Jewel in any man that hath the accomplishment thereof: Let this also (because all Judicious and learned men may see what wel-wishers our Parliaments are thereunto) be as a foundation stone inserted to the former, *viz.*

10. *That all Schools and Seminaries of good Learning and Religion, but more especially the two famous Universities of this Land,* Oxford *and* Cambridge *shall be equally encouraged, protected and countenanced; And that all the Lands, Donations, together with all the Charters, Immunities and municipal Laws of or belonging to any one of them shall be so strongly secured, that none of them shall at any time be impaired or in the least measure be taken away or diminished.*

And whereas it is very just and reasonable that the Session of every Parliament should be limitted, as to the time of their dissolution, least they should perpetuate themselves, and so debar others of their native birth-right from being admitted to an equal participation in the government of these Nations. And whereas it was esteemed an act of high grace and favour in the late King, when he

gave his Royal consent to the Bill for Trienial Parliaments, I presume then it will be very requisit that a new Parliament should be summoned every third year, and then of course the old Parliament to be dissolved; Even as the Common Counsel of the City of *London* are chosen every year, and the former are then of course annually dissolved. And whereas it is very necessary and expedient that the Parliament should continue their Session till their full time be expired (although they may adjourn as often and as long as they please) that so we may have our Representatives ready upon all occasions, to redresse all our grievances, to Manage all Publick Affairs, to entertain all Foreign States Ambassadours, whereby to ratifie, confirme and establish a true and well-grounded peace with our neighbour Nations, that so trade may be encouraged and increased both at home and abroad; And therefore I shall now proceed to lay this stone in this stately foundation, *viz.*

11. *That the Keepers of the Liberties of* England *by Authority of Parliament shall issue out Writs every third year for the Election of a new Parliament, and then the old shall of course be dissolved, whereby to give way for the new Members (being duely and fairly Elected) to succeed in their places.*

And whereas no Government in the World can possibly stand upon a sure and lasting foundation, unlesse there be some severe Law establisht and duely put in execution against all Persons whatsoever that shall endeavour the subversion thereof. It will be therefore by all men universally deemed necessary that this stone also be added to the former, *viz.*

12. *That every Person and Persons whatsoever that shall aid, abet or contrive towards the subversion of the Government as it is now established in the way of a Free State and Common-wealth, or shall be found actually in arms for the introducing of Monarchy, or any other single Person whatsoever to be chief Magistrate thereof, shall be judged guilty of High Treason, and being by sufficient Testimony convicted thereof, shall suffer the pains of death without mercy.*

And whereas it is esteemed a very unrighteous & an unjust thing (a thing which the great God of heaven and Earth doth perfectly abhor) that the Sons the Wives and the Relations should in any wise suffer in matter of estate for the fault and offence of the Traytor. And whereas upon this very account many Gentlemen by State policy have been trepan'd into a Conspiracy, for no other end

end, but becauſe the Tyrants that have Reigned have had ſome ſpleen againſt them, and that they might thereby (even *Ahab* like, in the buſineſſe of *Naboth*) have their Lands and Eſtates annexed to their Crowns; and therefore it will be a very juſt thing that all perſons ſo offending, having Wives, Children and Relations upon whom their Eſtates are Entail'd, that the perſons ſurviving ſhould as freely enjoy, take, and poſſeſſe the Eſtates of every ſuch Traytor as if he had not ſuffered accordingly. But if the Perſon ſo offending have an Eſtate clear of his own, and hath no Wife, nor Child, nor Relation upon whom his Eſtate is entail'd after his Diſceaſe, then it will be requiſite (in regard no perſon will ſuffer thereby) that all his Lands, Goods and Chattels ſhould be all forfeited to the Parliament, and brought into the publick Exchequer for the Uſe of the Common-Wealth. And therefore I will now inſert this Stone alſo into the foundation.

13. *That every Perſon and Perſons ſo offending in the caſe of High Treaſon, and being arraigned, convicted, and condemned thereupon, and if in caſe any ſuch perſon or perſons have a competent Eſtate, and having Wives, Children, or Relations upon whom their Eſtate is Entailed after his or their diſceaſe, then the Wife, Children, or Relations of every ſuch perſon or perſons ſhall freely enjoy, take, and poſſeſſe the Eſtate or Eſtates both real and perſonal of any ſuch Traytor as if he had not ſuffered accordingly; But if on the contrary, that if any ſuch perſon ſo offending and having a clear Eſtate of his own, and having no Wife, nor Children, nor Relations upon whom his Eſtate is Entail'd, then all the Lands, Goods and Chattels of every ſuch Traytor ſhall be forfeited to the* Parliament, *and brought into the publique* Exchequer *for the uſe and benefit of this Common-wealth.*

And whereas there are many Lawes now in force which are deſtructive and without mercy; and contrary hereunto, it will be very requiſite that ſuch be abrogated, aboliſhed and repealed (although I muſt confeſs I could here inſtance in ſundry more of the ſame import, which I hope either by you, or by future Repreſentatives, will in time be utterly made Null and Void; and it is a ſhame that in a Chriſtian Common-wealth ſuch horrid and impious Lawes ſhould be eſtabliſhed; As namely, the Statutes concerning the *Kings Bench*, the *Fleet*, and all other ſuch receptacles of injuſtice, and Cages of unclean Birds; as alſo thoſe many quirks and quillets and demurs in the Law (by tedious Law-ſuits) to keep men from their

their right, ſo that if a man have but ten pounds owing him, if his Debtor will ſtand out, *Fox* the Lawyer will make him ſpend twenty (I am ſure I ſpeak within compaſs) before he ſhall recover it, ſo that the remedy is far worſe than the diſeaſe : And although there have been many Petitions and Addreſſes made to Parliaments after Parliaments, that theſe Oppreſſions (which as the Scripture ſaith, *make wiſe men mad*) might be taken off, yet ſtill the Lawyers (thoſe Caterpillars and croaking Frogs which do ſwarm among us and eate up the fat of the Land) have had ſuch influence upon Supream Authority (as being many times the Major part themſelves) that theſe and ſuch like enormities could never yet to this day be redreſſed ; (but I ſhall leave them, deſiring pardon for my digreſſion and now proceed;) and therefore it will be very requiſite and neceſſary that this Stone alſo be added to the former, *viz.*

14. *That no Laws contrary to the Fundamental Laws and Conſtitution of this Nation herein contained, ſhall be binding to any of the People of this Common-wealth, but are hereby judged void, abrogated and repealed to all intents and purpoſes.*

And whereas it is very neceſſary, ſafe, and convenient that the Supream Authority of any Nation ſhould have the Power of Raiſing, Diſpoſing, and Disbanding of all Military Forces either by Sea or Land whatſoever, it will be therefore very rational that this be a principal Stone in this ſtately foundation, *viz.*

15. *That the Power of Raiſing, Diſpoſing and Disbanding of all the Forces either by Sea or Land, that ſhall be employed for the Service of this Common-wealth, ſhall reſide in the* Commons *of* England *aſſembled in* Parliament.

And that all your Laws and Statutes may be (like the orders of Heaven the great Legiſlators) full of grace and compaſſion, to be impartially communicated to every individual Member of this Nation, that ſo all men may ſee and be convinced by experience that you really intend a univerſal good. (And here I will aſſume to tell you what ſome do ſuppoſe, *viz.* That if once Kingſhip ſhould again in this Nation march in the Front, then Tyranny, Oppreſſion and Perſecution would ſuddenly follow after ; but if an holy and equal Common-wealth ſhould lead the Van, then Mercy, & Truth, and Juſtice would bring up the Rear, which the Lord of his mercy

grant

grant for his mercies ſake) And therefore let this then be the top Stone of this moſt ſtately foundation, *viz.*

16. *That no perſon or perſons whatſoever from the date hereof, that hath aided, abetted or contrived, or hath been in actual Arms in the late Wars, upon what pretence whatſoever, ſhall ever be called to an account for the ſame, but is hereby freely pardoned and indempnified, both as to life and Eſtate, and ſhall be equally protected (provided they do from hence forward live peaceably and quietly under the Government as it is now Eſtabliſhed) in their Liberties, and ſhall have the benefit of all Laws and Statutes made therein, as any other perſons whatſoever.*

Having now (by the good Providence of God) brought them to an head, I ſhall now (according to the Diſcipline of War) draw them up into an handſome and compleat Body; and (for methods ſake) ſhall preſent them to your Honors in Rank and File in their Cloſe Order.

I. *That the Government of theſe Nations of* England, Scotland, *and* Ireland, *and the Dominions and Territories thereunto belonging, ſhall be in the way of a Free State and equal Common-wealth.*

II. *That no Kingſhip ſhall be Exerciſed in theſe Nations, nor no Single Perſon whatſoever ſhall be Admitted to be Chief Magiſtrate thereof.*

III. *That there ſhall be no Houſe of Peers.*

IV. *That the Supream Legiſlative Power of theſe Nations, and the Executive Adminiſtration thereof ſhall be Diſtinct, and not in the ſame Hands.*

V. *That no High Courts of Juſtice ſhall be Erected, and that no perſon or perſons whatſoever ſhall ſuffer either in life, limb, or eſtate, but by the known Laws of the Land.*

VI. *That no Member of Parliament of what rank or quality ſoever, ſhall be exempted during the time of his Seſſion in Parliament, from any of the Laws, Statutes and Orders by them made, but ſhall be as Subject thereunto as any other perſon whatſoever.*

VII. *That no Moneys ſhall be Raiſed, nor Taxes ſhall be impoſed upon the People of this Common-wealth but by their own Conſent, viz. By their own Repreſentatives duly Choſen and Aſſembled in Parliament.*

VIII. *That upon the Death or Secluſion of every Member of Parliament, Writs ſhall be immediately iſſued forth from the Lord Keepers of the Liberties of* England *for the Election of New, that ſo none ſhall have*

have cause to Complain that they have no Trustees to represent them in Parliament.

IX *That no coercive Power whatsoever shall be used in matters of Religion, but that all professing Faith in God by Jesus Christ (though differing in Judgement in several Circumstantials in the profession thereof) shall be equally Protected, Countenanced, and Encouraged; nor shall any be persecuted, molested, restrained, or compelled in their Exercise thereof; but all persons whatsoever offending herein shall be deemed the Disturbers of the Peace, and shall be proceeded against accordingly.*

X. *That all Schools and Seminaries of good Learning and Religion, but more especially the two famous Universities of this Land,* Oxford *and* Cambridge *shall be equally protected, countenanced, and encouraged; and that all the Lands, Donations, together with all the Charters, Immunities, and Municipal Lawes of or belonging to any one of them, shall be so strongly secured and preserved, that none of them shall at any time be impaired, or in the least measure be taken away, or diminished.*

XI. *That the Keepers of the Liberties of* England *by Authority of Parliament, shall issue out Writs every Third Year for the Election of a New Parliament, and then the Old shall of course be Dissolved, whereby to give way for the New Members (being duly and fairly Elected) to succeed in their places.*

XII. *That every person and persons whatsoever that shall aid, abet, or contrive towards the Subversion of the Government as it is now Established in the way of a Free State and Common wealth, or shall be found actually in Arms for the introducing of Monarchy, or any other Single Person whatsoever to be Chief Magistrate thereof, shall be adjudged guilty of High Treason, and being by sufficient testimony convicted thereof, shall suffer the pains of Death without mercy.*

XIII. *That every person and persons so offending in the case of high Treason, and being arraigned, convicted, and condemned thereupon, and if in case any such person or persons have a competent Estate, and having Wives, Children, or Relations upon whom his or their Estate is by Law entail'd after their Decease, then the Wife, Children or Relations of every such person or persons, shall freely take, possesse and enjoy the Estate or Estates both real and personal of any such Traytor as if he had not suffered accordingly. But if on the contrary, if in case any such person or persons so offending, and having a clear Estate of their own, and having no wife, nor children, nor relations upon whom their Estates are entail'd; then*

then all the Lands, Goods and Chattels of every such Traytor shall be forfeited to the Parliament, and brought into the publick Exchequer for the use and benefit of this Common-wealth.

XIV. *That no Laws contrary to the Fundamental Laws and Constitution of this Nation herein contained, shall be binding to any of the People of this Common wealth, but are hereby judged void, abrogated, and repealed to all intents and purposes.*

XV. *That the power of Raising, Disposing, and Disbanding of all the Forces either by Sea or Land that are or shall be imployed for the Service of this Common-wealth shall reside in the Commons of* England *Assembled in Parliament.*

XVI. *That no person or persons whatsoever from the date hereof, that hath aided, abetted, or contrived, or hath been in actual Arms in the late Wars, upon what pretence whatsoever, shall ever be called to an account for the same, but is hereby freely pardoned and Indempnified both as to life and Estate, and shall be equally Protected (provided they do live henceforward peaceably and quietly under the Government as it is now Establish'd) in their Liberties, and shall have the benefit of all Laws and Statutes therein made as any other persons whatsoever, &c.*

And now most Worthy and Grave Senators, these things being accomplished, and you having brought the good Ship of this Common-wealth (by your singular Care and Wisdoms in the management thereof) into such a desired Harbour, and having settled us upon such a sure and lasting a foundation, I am sure that all the good and moderate People of these Nations will rejoyce at, and be glad to embrace, which (certain I am) will be so well pleasing and acceptable to Almighty God, that your very enemies (as *Solomon* emphatically expresseth it, *Prov.* 16. 7.) will be at peace with you. And after this my humble request (as was before intimated) unto you is, That you would make provision for a Full and Free Parliament without any Qualifications, Provisoes, or Restrictions whatsoever; for what need any of these if these fundamentals be once establish'd, ratified, and confirmed; and in order thereunto it will be very requisite, necessary and convenient that none be admitted to Sit and Serve as Members in Parliament without Engaging Solemnly upon Oath, (neither let this seem strange when as the peerlesse Majesty of Heaven and Earth in making Promises, which are of concernment to his People, doth not disdain to engage upon the same account) that he will not go

about to alter and make void the fundamental Laws of this Common-wealth; the Form of the Oath may be in manner and form as followeth.

I A. B. *do now in the presence of Almighty God, the searcher of all hearts, most solemnly Promise and Engage that I will not go about, during the time of my Session in Parliament, neither directly nor indirectly to alter the Government as it is now Established in the way of a Free State and Common-wealth; nor will I go about to abrogate, repeal and make void, but to the uttermost of my ability will preserve and establish the Fundamental Laws thereof.*

And so the Lord of his mercy guide you, counsel you, direct you, and protect you in all your undertakings, which shall be well pleasing in his sight. Amen.

But if you are Resolved to establish us upon a Kingly Government, or a Single Person to be chief Magistrate of these Nations, (although in the apprehensions of thousands we may be far happier in the former) then pray let it be Him who is so much desired; and then unlesse it be with such qualifications, restrictions, and provisoes as are here inserted, believe it, you will but enslave your selves thereby, and entayl slavery also upon your Posterities: But I am perswaded that if we had but once this Government establish'd but for two years at the most, there would be but very few (in regard they would be so sensible of the benefit thereof) that would desire a Change. And then if your lenity and indulgence should extend so far as to call Home those Exiled Persons to live among us in their Native Countrey, I am perswaded none would dare to make any Insurrections to disturbe the Peace of this Common-wealth upon this account; neither do I verily believe that that Person of Quality would desire any such thing in regard of that strict and severe Law that is establish'd against Delinquents upon that account; And indeed for that Person to live among us it would not be half so much a degradation to his honor, as it is to the late *Richard* Protector; for the Reason is apparent, the former was owned by most of the Counties in *England*, and also confirmed by Parliament to be our chief Magistrate; but the latter was never owned

owned nor proclaimed by Order of Parliament to be our dread Soveraign; And truly, to ſpeak ingenioufly, if a Parliament would call them over, and permit them to live among us, and thereupon make a general Contribution for a Sum of Money to purchaſe them competent Eſtates during their lives: I for my own particular (though I have nothing but what I have got and do get by my own careful Induſtry in my lawful Calling) would willingly (if they upon ſuch Terms would accept to come over) depoſite *Ten pounds* upon that account: And if all would Contribute [as I know many would] proportionably, they might then (without being obliged to forreign States for their Subſiſtance) live peaceably and comfortably in the Land of their Nativity.

And whereas in the *Title* of my *Book* I have there intimated the Propoſing of a very ready and convenient way (for the benefit of every Sheriff in each County, City or Burrough, which will ſave them much trouble in their Elections) for the Conveening of a full and free Parliament, I ſhall therefore with ſubmiſſion to better Judgements (although I would not impoſe it upon any County, City or Burrough, for it is likely ſome may approve thereof, and again it is probable ſome alſo may diſlike of the ſame) offer my own thoughts to publick Conſideration.

I know Scripture rules ſhould be prevailing Arguments to every moderate and ſober-ſpirited man, and we find upon ſacred Records, that *Solomon* himſelf ſaith, *Prov.*18.18. *The Lot cauſeth Contentions to ceaſe, and parteth between the mighty*: And we find, that one of the Apoſtles of our bleſſed Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt after his Aſcention, was Choſen in this manner, *Acts* 1. 23. And as I am credibly informed by a learned Hiſtorian, it was in manner and form as followeth, *viz.* That when the Apoſtles had nominated two men (the one whereof was to ſucceed in the room of him who betrayed his Maſter, and was to be a Witneſſe with them of his Reſurrection) they made Two Lots, which was two pieces of Paper or Parchment roul'd up (juſt as our young Blades of the Times do wear their *Valentines* in their Hats) in the *One* whereof was written theſe words, *viz.* *An APOSTLE*; and the *Other* was a *Blank* wherein nothing was inſcribed. Now theſe Two Lots were put into ſome place (either in a Hat or Napkin) where they might be ſhaken together, and then the Perſons ſo nominated were to proceed to Choice; And we find that after they had prayed unto

God to make choice of whom he pleased to take part of that Ministry and Apostle-ship from which *Judas* by transgression fell, they then gave forth their Lots, and the Lot fell upon *Matthias*, and he was numbred with the Apostles.

And now to bring this rare President home to our selves, we may take notice that whereas we are divided into so many parties in Religion, and into so many Sects, who are different in Judgement in several Circumstantials (which are but the fig-leaves of Religion) yet we do all unanimously concur and agree in the main; And all these are Christians and Free born People of *England*, and do all lay an equal claim to their just Rights and Liberties, both as men and Christians, and therefore ought to be admitted to an equal participation in the Government of this Common-wealth. And whereas these Parties may be reduced into *Three Heads*, viz. The *Episcopatians*, 2. the *Presbyterians*, 3. the *Sectarians*; And that all these may be satisfied in their Elections of their Members to Sit and Serve in Parliament: It may be very commodiously done in manner and form as followeth, *viz.*

After Writs are issued forth from the Lord Keepers of the Liberties of *England* to every Sheriff of each County, City or Burrough for the Election of Members to Serve in Parliament, let Proclamation be made to give notice to all Parties that are therein concerned, to give their attendance at the time and place prefixt by the Sheriffs accordingly (the which we will suppose to be on *Whitsun Monday* continually, in regard then the dayes are almost at the longest, and the Parliaments may thereupon alwayes Commence their Reign from *Midsummer-day* following) And being come to the usual place for Elections, let these three Parties divide themselves in an orderly and decent manner into Three distinct Bodies, according to their several perswasions; and now being so devided, let them proceed to the Nomination of their Members; and let every Party have free liberty to nominate and make choice of so many Persons as are to be Chosen for that County, City, Burrough, (and I presume they cannot reasonably desire more then so many as are to be chosen for the place.) And after this being done, let them all in an orderly manner repair to the Sheriff to present those whom they have so Nominated, to draw every man forth his Lot; but let none presume to open his Lot but the Sheriff only: And to make it yet more plain, I will give you an instance

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in the moſt famous City of *London*, where there is uſually Four Burgeſſes Choſen for the ſame.

Now when all theſe three Parties are aſſembled together for the end aforeſaid, and being divided into three Parties, let every Party nominate and chuſe 4. which makes up in all 12. Whereupon let the Sheriff have accordingly 12. papers or pieces of parchment rolled up, (and ſealed if he think requiſite, or elſe ſome private mark to prevent any counterfeits in that nature) in 4. whereof let theſe words be inſcribed, *viz. A Parliament man.* And after theſe parties have nominated their full number, let them in an orderly manner repair to the Sheriff to preſent them unto him, to draw forth every man his lot. Whereupon let Proclamation be made by the Cryer with an audible Voyce to the people, to let them know that the Lots are all drawn in an orderly and decent manner, and asking them whether they are all agreed, and willing to conſent to thoſe for Members to ſerve in Parliament upon whom the Lots ſhall fall, and the people by an acclamation giving their conſent, then let all thoſe who have ſo drawn, in an orderly manner give forth their Lots unto the Sheriff, and wherein he finds in any of them the aforementioned words, *viz. A Parliament man*, asking him his name, let him thereupon make Proclamation that ſuch a Gentleman is freely choſen a Member of Parliament; And ſo let every one accordingly be enrolled & returned according to his Writ received from the Keepers of the Liberties of *England* before mentioned. And after this Ceremony is performed, Let all the people by Proclamation be diſmiſt, and to repair quietly and peaceably home to their own habitations, *&c.*

And whereas *Solomon* ſaith, *Prov.* 25. 11. *A word fitly ſpoken is like Apples of Gold in pictures of ſilver.* I ſhall here preſume to impart my minde in a few lines by way of advice to the Electors, and ſo I ſhall conclude. And therefore moſt worthy Countrey Men, my friends and Relations, if you would have Magiſtrates as at the firſt, and Councellors as at the beginning, then I would earneſtly preſs you in the firſt place to take that moſt wholſom and notable counſel (which the meekeſt man that ever breathed upon the face of the earth did himſelf embrace) which *Jethro* gave to his Son in law *Moſes* the Servant of the Lord, *Exod.* 18. 13, *&c.* upon this very account. Where you may finde four moſt notable Qualifications, which will be of excellent concernment unto you in the

Election

Election of your Magistrates, and if duely observed, it will undoubtedly answer your expectations for the accomplishment of all those holy ends and purposes before mentioned; as for instance,

1. *You are to chuse able men, that is, men of able parts and abilities, and also men of considerable estates and fortunes; and here you may please to observe, that every honest, good well meaning man is not an able man; and therefore this first Qualification is very requisite and necessary in your Elections.*

2. *You are to chuse men fearing God; this is so plain that it needs no explication, and without this Qualification you cannot expect good Magistrates, but they will be ever and anon exceedingly corrupted. Pray do but peruse* Nehemiah 5. *and there you may see what a good Governour* Nehemiah *was that had this Qualification, Where he saith that the former Governours that had been before him were chargeable unto the people, and had exceedingly oppress them, nay and their servants did bear rule over them, but so did not he; and the reason he gave was this,* viz. *because of the fear of the Lord; And therefore this second qualification is most requisite and necessary in your Elections.*

3. *You are to chuse men of Truth, that is men of known integrity and uprightnesse in their generations, men that you observe do deal faithfully between man and man, that is impartial unto all, that will neither respect the persons of the poor nor the faces of the rich in Judgement, but will distribute Justice equally and impartially unto all, which is of such absolute necessity for humane society, that as a Learned Phylosopher doth observe, the very society of common Rogues and Thieves cannot subsist without it, but will immediately be broken and fall to the ground; And therefore this third qualification is most requisite and altogether necessary also in your Elections.*

4. *You are to chuse men hating covetousnesse, that is, men of most heroick and Noble spirits, and that do not so far idolize the transitory pelfe of this World as to make it their God, to be sure such a person will never be a good Common-Wealths man, and therefore he is unworthy to be a Statesman, but he is a fellow onely fit to keep company with swine, and to grovel in the earth, (like a muck worm as he is) whereby to heap up more Treasure into his accursed Corban. And therefore this last qualification is a most excellent qualification also in your Elections.*

But again I would earnestly press you in the next place that by no

no means you would chuſe any ſuch perſons as you ſee are ambitious to be choſen, and thereupon go about (as it is too frequently uſed) to get ſubſcriptions to be in nomination, which is a moſt ignoble and unworthy action (and ſo far below the ſpirit and temper of an heroick perſon, as he would be aſhamed of the very cogitations thereof) for if a man have not demeand himſelf ſo wel in his generation as to get the love of the Country where he doth reſide, certainly ſuch a perſon is not worthy to be in nomination for a Member of Parliament, for ſuch a one certainly is ambitious to be choſen either out of the pride of his own heart, or elſe out of ſome baſe ſiniſter end or other, on purpoſe to bring about his carnal and ſelf-ended deſignes; and therefore I would adviſe you to have a ſpecial care how you chuſe ſuch perſons to ſit as Members in Parliamentary proceedings.

But again in the next place I would moſt earneſtly preſs you to have a ſpecial care of avoiding one rock more (and it is a very dangerous one indeed, againſt which the good Ship of this Common-Wealth hath many times been likely to ſuffer Shipwreck) *viz. FOX* the Lawyer; And therefore I would deſire you by no means to make choice of any of theſe Birds of prey and Wolves in the Common Wealth, whoſe intereſt it is (and whoſe principal livelihood alſo) onely to worry the poor innocent Sheep, or elſe how is it that ſo many corrupt Laws are now in force, which although they have been from time to time, from one Parliament after another petitioned againſt, yet theſe Caterpillars have alwayes had ſuch influence in the houſe (as being often times the *major* part thereof themſelves) as that they could never yet be repealed, but do remain in full force and power to this very day.

Again, if this way which is here propoſed be aſſented unto for the Election of Members, then in the laſt place I would earneſtly intreat you not to Murmure and repine if in caſe the *major* part of the Parliament be not of your perſwaſion, for ſince you have already left that to Almighty God, you ought with patience to acquieſce in his determination. And inaſmuch as you have your propriety in matters Temporal, and your Liberty of Conſcience in things Spiritual already firmly ſecured, you need not fear any one Party whatſoever can do you any prejudice upon that account. And indeed who knows but if thoſe of the *Epiſcopal* perſwaſion are the moſt able Men for the Spirit of Government, but it may ſo pleaſe

God

God to over-rule the Elections, as that the *major* Lots may fall upon them. And who knows but if those of the *Presbyterian* perswasion are the most able Men for the Spirit of Government, but it may so please God as that the *major* lots may fall upon them; and so likewise of the Third. And again who knows, but among such a number of Persons (*viz.* 1200 or thereabouts) it may so please God as to over-rule the Elections, as that the Lots may fall upon the most able among all Parties for the Spirit of Government to be our future Representatives. And so the Lord of his Mercy grant a patient, a cheerful and constant submission to our present and future Magistrates of what perswasion soever, that so it may please God to take delight to be in the midst of us, and that we may have his Paternal presence, even the presence of his Love and Favour, that so he may say at the last (and doubtless we must never expect any such Benediction from him, until we are united in true Love and affection, and then we may certainly expect that he that did command the Light to shine out of darkness will utter his voyce and say) *Be ye setled upon a lasting Foundation.* And let every good Christian say *AMEN.*

FINIS.